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November 1985 04683

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T.V. SPORTS

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THE ARROGANCE OF GREATNESS

Sgt. Slaughter Defeats Larry Zbyszko:
AMERICA'S WRESTLER BECOMES AMERICAS CHAMPION

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AND THE WINNER IS . . .
RODDY PIPER!

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PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

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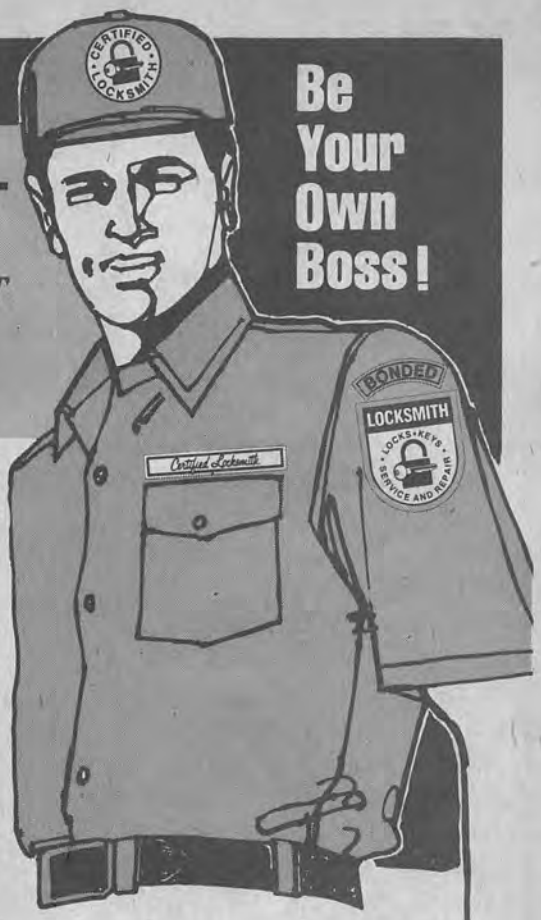

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BETWEEN FALLS

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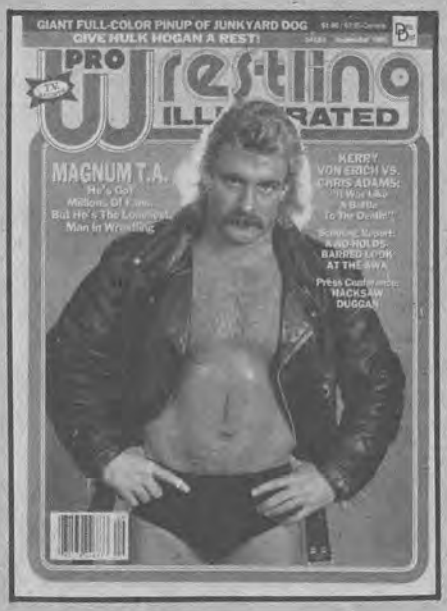
MAGNUM OPINIONS

I was fascinated by your cover story in the September issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* ("Magnum T.A.: He's Got Millions Of Fans, But He's The Loneliest Man In Wrestling"). I didn't know Magnum T.A. had millions of fans. I wasn't aware, until informed by Dusty Rhodes, that "my man Magnum is one of the most popular men in the whole wrestling world." And I was taken aback by the revelation of Dr. Lawrence Maltin, Medical Director of Applied Research in Psychobiochemistry, that he "wouldn't be surprised to find that Magnum T.A. was a very lonely man." These were all very revealing characteristics of a man I had previously known very little about.

My next question must logically be: Who cares? This Magnum T.A. seems about as inspiring as wilted lettuce. So he's lonely. So is my grandmother. She walks around the park all day muttering to herself. At least Magnum has someone to talk to.



I'm getting extremely worn out by these stories that glorify every detail of an athlete's life. Am I supposed to feel sorry for Magnum T.A. because he's lonely? I'll save my sympathy for the hostages, or for athletes who suffer career-ending injuries. If Magnum T.A. is depressed, let him see a psychiatrist. I'd much prefer to read about a match than about some prima donna's emotional problems.

PATRICIA FRANCO
Great Neck, NY

I was deeply touched by the September '85 cover story about Magnum T.A. Magnum is the greatest wrestler in the world today, and the sweetest man to boot. His eyes tell it all: They're sad and haunted and reveal a man that isn't all that happy despite his overwhelming success. What makes *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* a cut beyond any other magazine is its willingness to report on more than just what goes on in the ring. A personality feature like the one on Magnum allows the fan access to the wrestler's inner being. That's what I call in-depth reporting. Magnum T.A. will undoubtedly be the next NWA World champion, and now, thanks to your magazine, his fans have a different perception of how he treats his success.

MICHELLE FAUST
Canton, OH

TV OR NOT TV

I think if the WWF wants to attract an audience to its television matches then they ought to create a TV title like many of the other areas of the country have. Practically every match that is on WWF television is a mismatch. The promoters serve up these preliminary incompetents to the main eventers and expect the fans to tune in every week. What a bunch of idiots! If they made a TV title, perhaps it would spark some interest in the matches. Because without some kind of added excitement, their programs are going to shrivel up and die.

LINDA MONTIGUE
San Fransisco

ADAMS' FALL

So Chris Adams finally found out what Gary Hart was really like. Nice going, Chris, considering it only took you an entire year. Perhaps you'll be smart enough to ask the Von Erichs for forgiveness now, although I don't think they're too interested in seeing your smiling face. Soon you'll realize that you have the Von Erichs *and* Gary Hart's stable after you. I used to pray every night for you to go back to the Von Erichs, but I don't anymore because I realize how stupid you really are. You don't deserve the Von Erichs, but you

(Continued on page 46)

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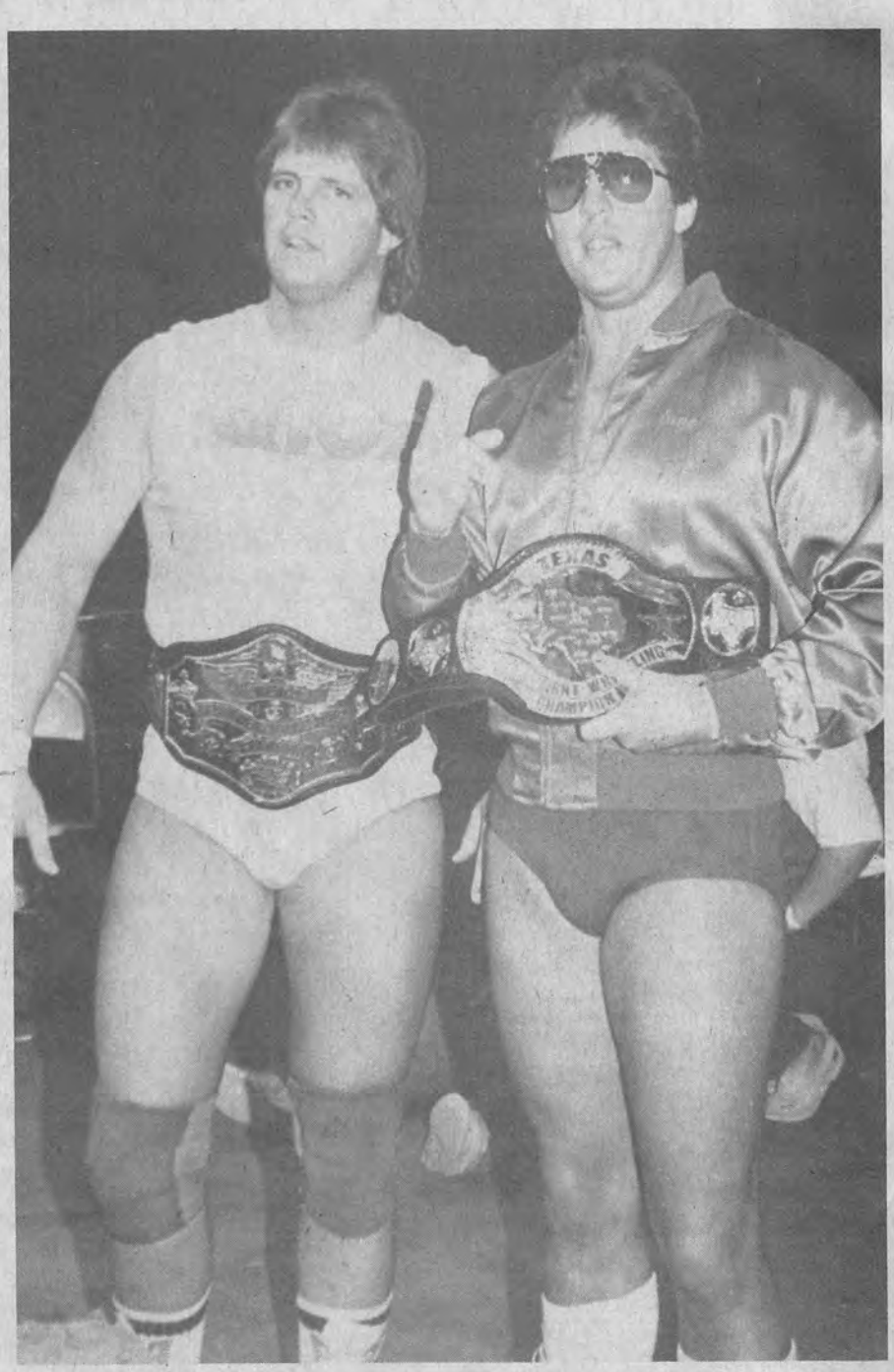
RINGSIDE

With Bill Apter

TWO OF TEXAS' most hated wrestlers, **Gino Hernandez** and **Chris Adams**, are now Texas' most hated tag team champions. Gino and Chris recently won the World Class tag team title from **The Fantastics, Bobby Fulton** and **Tommy Rogers**. The end came when Rogers tried a dive on Hernandez, who Tommy thought was unconscious. Hernandez lifted his knees just before Rogers was ready to make impact. While Rogers gripped his abdomen in pain, Hernandez covered the Fantastic for the pinfall victory. By the way, Adams currently holds the World Class American title while partner Hernandez is Texas champion. "We've almost got a lock on the Texas titles!" Hernandez exclaimed at a post-match press conference. "All we've got to do now is concentrate on those **Von Erich** wimps for the six-man championship, and then we've got 'em all!"

Speaking about multiple-title champions, **Hercules Hernandez** just defeated **Hector Guerrero** for the Florida state title. Hernandez, managed by **Percy Pringle**, now holds the Florida **and** Southern belts . . . **Hulk Hogan** continues to expand his out-of-the-ring career. He's slated to guest-star in upcoming episodes of **The Love Boat** and **The A-Team,** and soon you'll see the Hulkster in a Cheerios commercial! . . . Huge 7'7", 499-pound **Little John** is wrestling for Texas' Lone Star Promotions. "You know, I'm still a rookie," John told me in a recent interview. "I'm

(Continued on page 54)



Chris Adams (left, wearing the American belt) and Gino Hernandez (holding the World Class Texas belt) now have two more belts for their collection: They just won the World Class tag team title from The Fantastics.

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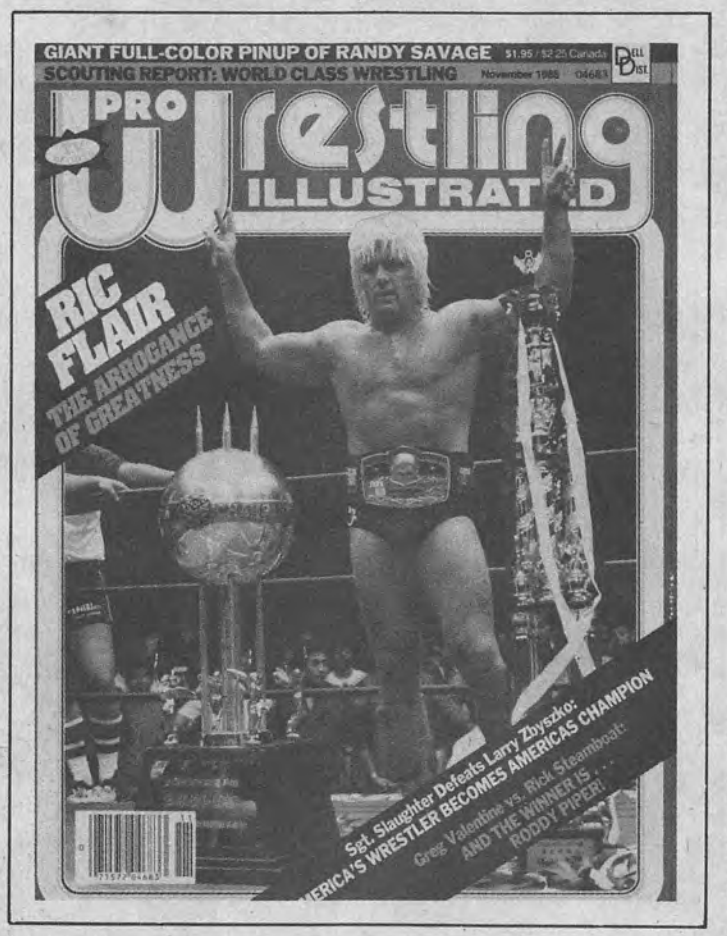

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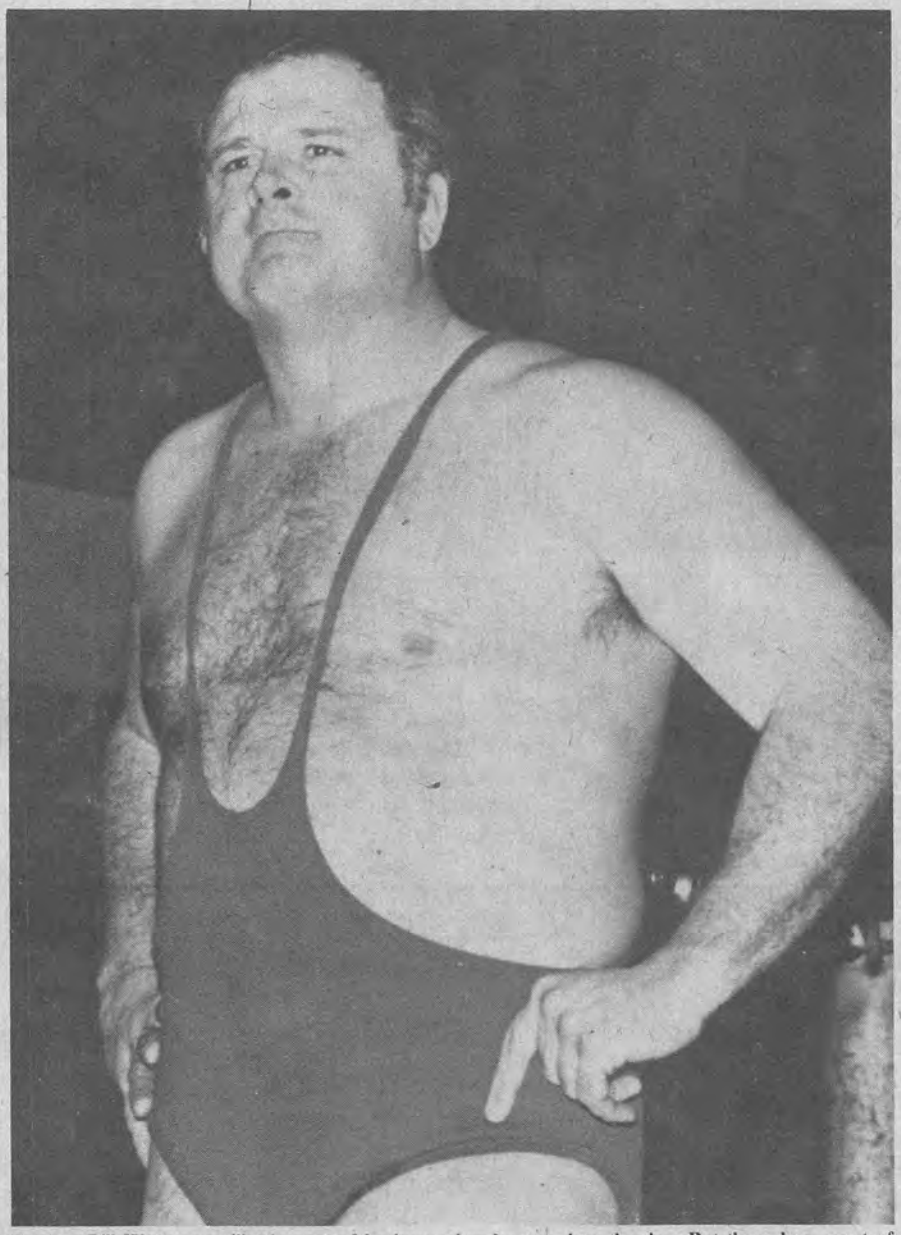
KING'S COURT

By Peter King



Cowboy Bill Watts can still take care of business when he steps into the ring. But these days, most of Watts' time is spent takin' care of another type of business—the running of the Mid-South promotion.

THEY CALL HIM "The Cowboy," and for more than 20 years Bill Watts has walked tall. When wrestlers get together and share anecdotes of their toughest matches, the name "Bill Watts" is spoken in awed whispers. Through the years, Watts has been one of the greatest wrestlers who ever lived.

A wrestler who demanded anonymity told me this: "Often, a wrestler with an open contract who had ticked off a promoter found his opponent would be Bill Watts. He'd turn up from nowhere sometimes. But I'll tell you, no opponent anywhere strikes fear into a wrestler like Bill Watts. He is 305 pounds of tough."

Bill Watts laughs when he is reminded of his gunslinger reputation. "It's true, through the years I've wrestled where I was needed. Sometimes I've stayed in an area for years, sometimes for just one night. Depends on how long it takes to get the job done."

Currently, Watts is firmly entrenched in the Mid-South area, where he is the promoter. Watts has built the Mid-South promotion into one of the two or three finest in the world. As a businessman, Bill Watts is also 305 pounds of tough.

Many fans around the country got their first look at Mid-South wrestling when the television show was picked up by Ted Turner's SuperStation for a limited run a few months ago. It was a historic moment when Watts' TV show went on the cable.

"At the time, the WWF had a stranglehold on all of the national cable services," Watts says. "They were on USA, MSG, WTBS, and Channel 9 in New York. Mid-South was the breakthrough program for other promotions."

And the fans liked what they saw. Though it was only on the air for a few weeks, Mid-South wrestling became the highest-rated program on all of cable-TV. "The WWF gets all the publicity," Watts says, "but Mid-South drew the ratings numbers."

(Continued on page 56)

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DRESSING CONFIDENTIAL ROOM

By Stu Saks

BILLY JACK HAYNES knew he would have to take a lot of flak when he showed up in Florida recently after publicly announcing his plans to wrestle in the World Championship area. He's used to it. "I've heard something about every career move I've ever made," he said, shrugging his broad shoulders. "It doesn't affect me anymore."

Whether or not that's true is something I guess only Billy knows himself. But even Billy would admit that nobody is being unfair to him when they ask, "What the hell are you doing with your career?"

Less than a year ago, Billy Haynes was selected 1984's "Most Improved Wrestler." The fans who voted for him felt he was on the verge of joining the elite group of wrestling superstars that included the names Hulk Hogan, Kerry and Kevin Von Erich, Ric Flair, Dusty Rhodes, Sgt. Slaughter, and The Road Warriors: men who not only had vast amounts of success in the ring, but who could stimulate sales at the box office.

Today, Haynes is often spoke of in terms of wasted potential. Certain decisions he has made have greatly harmed his career. In fairness, some of those decisions were not totally his fault, but it doesn't change the fact that they have hindered his progress.

Haynes reached the height of his popularity while wrestling in Florida last year. Before that, he had wrestled solely in the Pacific Northwest, which limited him in terms of national recognition and variety of opposition. He originally went to Florida to meet his idol, Dusty Rhodes, and made the decision to remain for a while. He would go on to have tremendous success in the Sunshine State, winning the Florida State title from Kendo Nagasaki in a cage match in March 1984 and beating Superstar Graham in a $50,000 full-nelson challenge match the next month. Very little has gone well for Billy since then.

Billy Jack Haynes has returned to the Florida area, site of the greatest accomplishments in his brief career. Hercules Hernandez wishes Haynes would return to the Pacific Northwest.

At the time the WWF was beginning its expansion campaign, Billy made the decision to leave the NWA and head to the WWF. After one easy victory, Billy realized he had made a mistake. Not only would it be impossible for him to get a title match against WWF champion Hulk Hogan, but he also came to the realization that the NWA title was the only one that was important to him.

Fortunately for him, the NWA did not hold Haynes' brief defection against him. His return to the NWA brought him to the Texas World Class area. By this time, Billy felt he was well-known enough to do something he had wanted to do for some time: He changed his name from that of someone he admired in the movies to that of someone he has admired his whole life. Billy Jack assumed his true name, Billy Haynes, to honor his father, and

(Continued on page 52)

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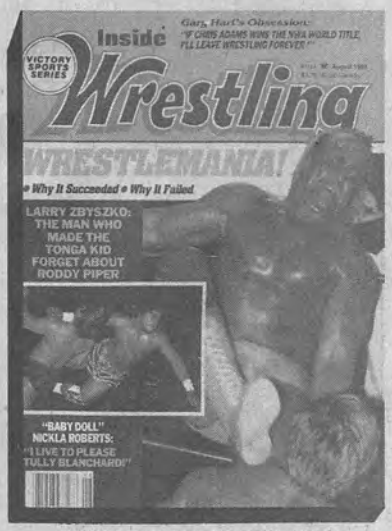

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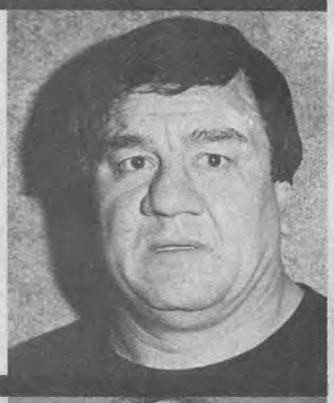
WAHOO McDANIEL

"Ric Flair did me a great service when he placed that bounty on my head. I'm a better wrestler now then I've ever been. I've been wrestling the meanest men in the sport for the past five months and all it's done is refine my game and make me madder than hell. I hope Ric Flair has insurance, because after I get through with him, he's gonna be laid up for a long time. Flair had one too many laughs this time. This time he's gonna pay for his chuckles with my knuckles."



HACKSAW DUGGAN

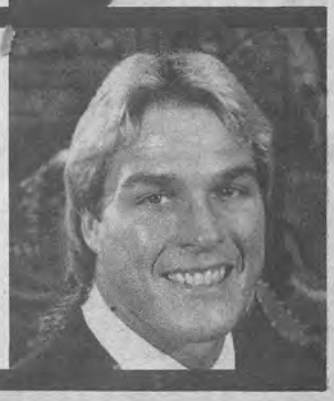
"There are scars on my face that will never heal. There are scars in my memory that will always keep me up at night. Sometimes I close my eyes and all I can see are the flames. I was never one for revenge, but things aren't the same for me anymore. If I have to follow him around for the rest of my life, I will make Skandor Akbar pay for what he has done to me. I want him to suffer like I have suffered."

MIKE VON ERICH

"My shoulder will heal, there's no permanent injury to it, but what I'm going to do to One Man Gang will last the rest of his miserable life. It burns me up that some fat monstrosity would try to put me out of wrestling. Injuries are part of wrestling—we all know that—but every wrestler has to allow each other to make a living. I know my brothers want a piece of his hide, but I told them to wait until I'm better. I'll only need one crack at him."

TERRY TAYLOR

"I'm going to cut down on wrestling this summer. The next three months I will devote myself to training in the gym. That episode with Flair and The Nightmare taught me a lesson. You can never be too tough in this sport. It'll be a new and improved Terry Taylor that everyone will see in September. And at the top of my list will be Ric Flair. He was responsible for me losing the North American belt. Now it's time to return the favor."



STEVE WILLIAMS

"Ted DiBiase and I dare any other belt-holding tag team in the world to come wrestle us. That includes The Road Warriors, that includes the Koloffs, that includes the Von Erichs. The way I feel right now about my career, I think I can take any tag team on by myself! DiBiase is probably the only wrestler in the world who can match me, fist for fist, in the world. It frightens me to think what we can do together in the ring. We can blow anybody away."

SGT. SLAUGHTER

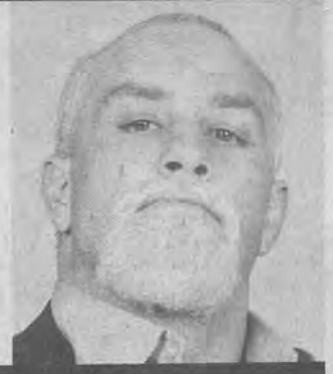
"As the Americas champion, my crusade will be stronger than ever. The hostage crisis in Beirut underlined the importance of a strong national unity. The United States is the target of the world—in business, in war, and in the ring. We all must do our share. My job is to clean up the world of professional wrestling. How can we allow men like Adnan Al-Kaissie or Kamala to take money from our economy and enjoy the American freedoms we fought so hard for? We can't, that's how. And I'll do my best to prevent them."

BLACK BART

"So Ronnie Garvin has hands of stone does he? Well I guess my hands must be made of iron because I sure as hell had no problems taking that boy's National Championship belt from him. That guy is nothing but a lot of wind. If everyone thinks that Garvin is great, I guess they must think that I'm the King's underwear. I knew there was a reason I always hated the fans. What a bunch of ignorant slobs they are."

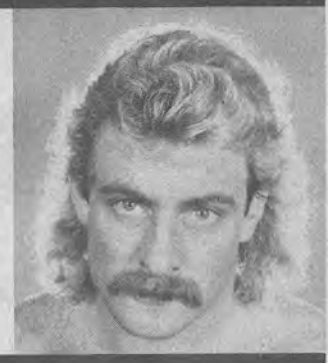
PAUL ELLERING

"I look forward to the challenge the Koloffs can provide my Road Warriors. It's very easy for Hawk and Animal to get bored. The Koloffs can push them to sharpen their skills. Nikita is inexperienced, but he has the physical tools. Koloff makes up for Nikita's inexperience and adds some power of his own. No, the Koloffs aren't good enough to beat The Road Warriors. But they are good enough to at least keep them interested in wrestling."



MAGNUM T.A.

"All this publicity doesn't mean anything to me. When I leave the arena, I never even look at a paper or a magazine. If you start reading all the great things they write about you, soon you might start believing them. The last thing I need right now is to get complacent, but I'm not that type. I like to wrestle and then do my own thing. I was never much one for hype and fame. I suppose that's why Ric Flair and I are so opposite in every way."



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July 1982/Stories include: Hogan, Rhodes, Steamboat, Adonis.
August 1982/Stories include: Andre, Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Backlund.
September 1982/Stories include: Atlas, Piper, Lawler, Brody.
October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.
November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.
December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.
February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBiase, Race.
March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk.
April 1983/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.
May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.
June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.
July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.
August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.
September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.
October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.
November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.
December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.
January 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Rich, Superstar, Piper.
February 1984/Stories include: Abdullah, Sawyers, Valiant, Von Erich.
March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.
April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.
May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.
June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase.
July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.
August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler.
September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.
October 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Road Warriors, Steamboat, Piper.
November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.
December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A.
January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.
February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.
March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.
April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Albano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy.
May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.
June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.
July 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Nikita, Warriors.
August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbyszko vs. The Tonga Kid.
September 1985/Stories include: Piper, Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A.

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☐ JULY 74	☐ OCT 77	☐ APR 80	☐ AUG 82	☐ JUNE 84
☐ AUG 74	☐ NOV 77	☐ MAY 80	☐ SEPT 82	☐ JULY 84
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☐ NOV 74	☐ FEB 78	☐ JULY 80	☐ NOV 82	☐ SEPT 84
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☐ AUG 75	☐ AUG 78	☐ SEPT 80	☐ FEB 83	☐ NOV 84
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August 1975/Stories include: Sammartino, Patterson, Stasiak, Rivera.

December 1975/Stories include: Mascaras, Rhodes, McDaniel, Blackjacks.

January 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Putski, Wrestling II, Rhodes.

February 1976/Stories include: Andre, Sammartino, Rhodes, Valentine.

June 1976/Stories include: Mascaras, Putski, Patera, Bruiser.

July 1976/Stories include: Andre, Wrestling II, Inoki, Von Erich.

November 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Valentine, Mosca.

December 1976/Stories include: Von Erich, Mulligan, Brody, Funk.

January 1977/Stories include: Brody, Andre, Wrestling II, Mascaras.

February 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Jones, Funk, Von Raschke.

April 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Funk, Flair, Bockwinkel.

May 1977/Stories include: Mascaras, Valiants, Andersons, Sammartino.

June 1977/Stories include: Patera, Putski, Hernandez, McDaniel.

July 1977/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Rocca, Mascaras.

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November 1978/Stories include: Flair, Andre, Ladd, Graham.

December 1978/Stories include: Brisco, Mulligan, Andre, Blanchard.

OCTOBER 1982

February 1979/Stories include: Ladd, Flair, Idol, Heenan.

May 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Brody, Valiants, Race.

July 1979/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Sammartino, Andre.

August 1979/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Patera, Stevens, Superstar.

September 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Graham, Piper, Mascaras.

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January 1980/Stories include: Race, Backlund, Snuka, Brisco.

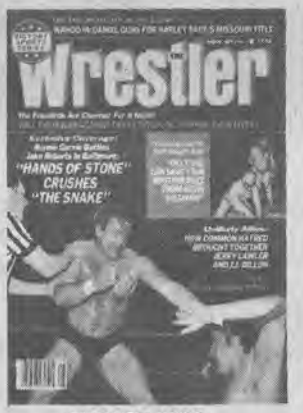
February 1980/Stories include: Andre, Flair, DiBiase, Superstar.

March 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Murdoch, Mulligan, Andre.

April 1980/Stories include: Rhodes, DiBiase, Youngblood, Wrestling II.

May 1980/Stories include: Andre, Mascaras, Bockwinkel, Patera.

June 1980/Stories include: Backlund, Abdullah, Brisco, Flair.



AUGUST 1984

August 1980/Stories include: Valentine, Zbyszko, Von Erich, Albano.

September 1980/Stories include: Ladd, Patera, Steamboat, Gagne.

October 1980/Stories include: Patera, Rhodes, Wrestling II, Morales.

November 1980/Stories include: Rich, Hogan, Snuka, Super Destroyers.

January 1981/Stories include: Valentine, Rhodes, Patera, Von Erich.

February 1981/Stories include: Zbyszko, Patera, Iron Sheik, Wrestling II.

March 1981/Stories include: Rich, Samoans, Blassie, Wrestling II.

May 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, DiBiase, Moondogs.

June 1981/Stories include: Sammartino, Piper, Rich, Martel.

July 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Flair, Atlas.

August 1981/Stories include: DiBiase, Slaughter, Martel, Idol.

October 1981/Stories include: Funks, Rhodes, Race, Sullivan.

December 1981/Stories include: Rhodes, Steele, Race, Hogan.

January 1982/Stories include: Rich, Steamboat, Sullivan, Sammartino.

March 1982/Stories include: Slaughter, Albano, Flair, Race.

April 1982/Stories include: Brisco, Armstrongs, Valentine, Santana.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Von Erich, Graham, Rich.

June 1982/Stories include: Steamboat, Reed, Albano, Piper.

July 1982/Stories include: Rich, Sawyer, Flair, Steamboat.

August 1982/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Mulligans, Piper.

September 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, Armstrong, Blair.

October 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rhodes, Santana, Piper.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Piper, Blair.

December 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rich, Kamala, Junkyard Dog.

January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala.

March 1983/Stories include: Piper, Reed, Valiant, Roberts.

April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Tiger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy.

May 1983/Stories include: Samoans, Von Erich, Rhodes, Orndorff.

June 1983/Stories include: Windham, Martel, Brody, Andre.

July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis, Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Briscos, Bass.

November 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki.

December 1983/Stories include: Mascaras, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko.

January 1984/Stories include: Valentine, Hogan, Von Erich, Road Warriors.

March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.

April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog.

June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.

July 1984/Stories include: Rich, Billy Jack, Valiant, Von Erich.

August 1984/Stories include: Garvin, Sullivan, Freebirds, Street.

September 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Piper, Steamboat, Billy Jack.

October 1984/Stories include: Flair, Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Bundy.

November 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Von Erich, Piper, Brody.

December 1984/Stories include: Martel, Santana, Von Erich, Steamboat.

January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs.

February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.

March 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Warriors, Martel, Rude.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Von Erich-Adams, Flair, Tonga & Snuka.

May 1985/Stories include: Warriors. Backlund, Santana, Rich.

June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.

July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.

August 1985/BONUS 4-PG. COLOR SECTION! Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A., Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.

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ON ASSIGNMENT

BY LIZ HUNTER

[Editor's Note: Liz Hunter has been receiving a record amount of mail from readers. This month, she answers some of the letters.]

Dear Liz,

In the July issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, you spoke first of your admiration for Nickla Roberts, then of your disappointment in her changing her name to Baby Doll. The way I see it, Nickla Roberts has the world in the palm of her hand. She's tall and great-looking, she works hard in doing something she likes and is good at, and she is being kept by a handsome, rich, and successful wrestler. I don't see how she's sold out at all. What I see is Liz Hunter being more than a little jealous.—Nellie Abromowitz, Bronx, NY

Nickla "Baby Doll" Roberts can no longer be considered a role model for women, according to columnist Liz Hunter.

Dear Nellie Abromowitz,

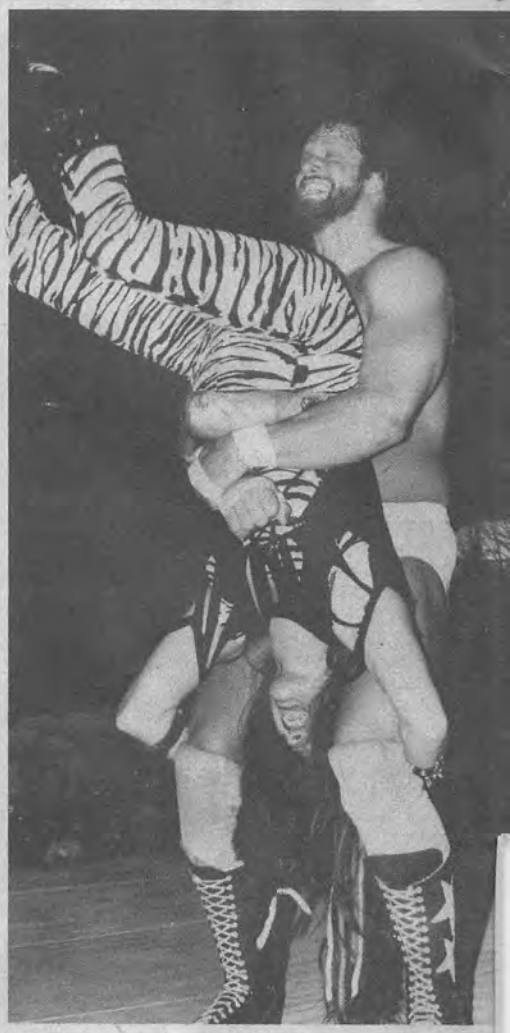
I am not jealous of anyone who goes around calling herself Baby Doll. What I said in that column, Nellie, is that Baby Doll can no longer be considered the role model for other women that Nickla Roberts was. That she makes a lot of money or lives with a handsome guy is irrelevant. What's important is that she has sacrificed her independence in doing so. That's the difference.

Dear Liz,

First of all, let me tell you how much I enjoy your column. Having a woman's viewpoint of professional wrestling is most refreshing. Now my question: What do you think of placing a limit on the amount of time that two wrestlers can fight each other? Your September column about Kevin Von Erich and Chris Adams just reminded me of how sick I am of hearing about those two fighting. Don't you think a ceiling on how often two wrestlers can wrestle each other would increase the intensity of each match? Imagine how crazy Von Erich and Adams would get if they knew that their next match would be their last for the next six months!—Lewis Reese, Bloomington, IN

Dear Mr. Reese,

Your suggestion, while interesting, would seem impossible to carry out. Despite your boredom with the Von Erich-Adams feud, it remains one of the most exciting in wrestling and one that the fans continue to clamor for. As long as the fans wish to see two men fight—and as long as they continue to pay for it—the promoters will continue to sign them. Feuds, which I consider nothing more than spirited



Randy Savage piledrives Miss Linda, a woman half his weight. Hunter believes this is uncalled for—no matter what Linda did.

competition anyway, are the building blocks of the sport. They lend to wrestling its continuity. To deny that would change the sport and I'm not sure if that change would be for the better.

Dear Liz,

If Hulk Hogan isn't a World's Champion, then no one is.—Billy Baxter, Tulsa, OK

Dear Bill,

He is. He is. He is. (See "Ratings Analysis.") Okay? All right? Satisfied?

Dear Lizzie Borden,

You take all the fun out of wrestling with your big city sophistication. Why don't you go write for *Cosmopolitan* or something?—Jack Ames, Waco, TX

Dear Jack the Ripper,

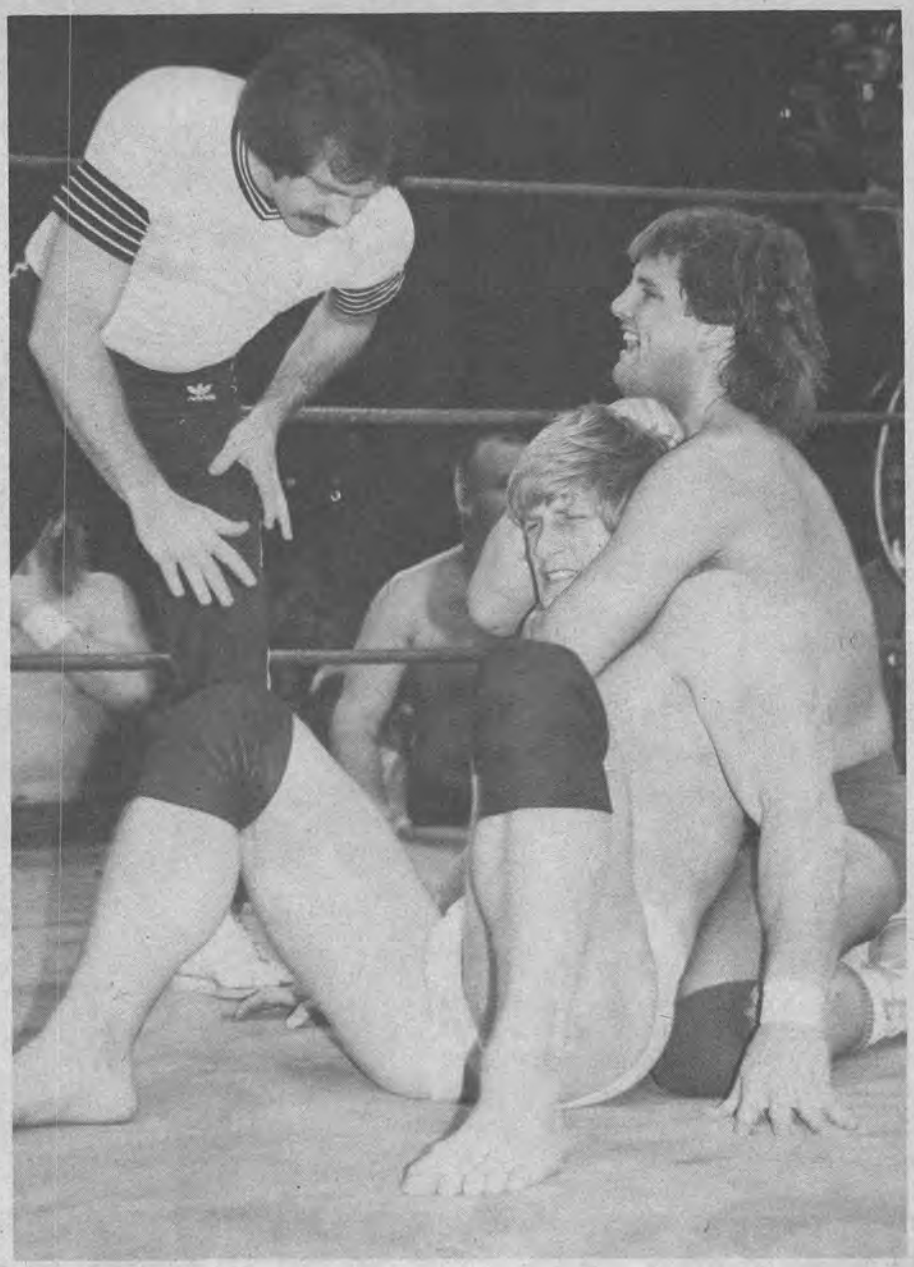
Or something turned down my application. Thankfully the majority of my readers aren't as Waco as you.

Dear Liz,

In your letter to Stacy Gerber (August 1985), you practically gave female valets the license to attack people. I quote, "What Randy Savage did to Miss Linda strikes me as very gratuitous, very sadistic, and very unnecessary. The woman is clearly being abused." Are you crazy? Randy Savage should be applauded for his piledriver on Miss Linda. These women should suffer the consequences for their actions. There pretty faces have no place in wrestling. If they persist there are many wheelchairs just begging to be filled.—Collie Bell, Little Rock, AR

Dear Collie,

Rarely have I been quoted out of context with such a stylish lack of concern. I do not condone the actions of female valets at ringside. My column that month was addressing the issue of violence that exists because of the valet's interference. I was thinking out loud, if you will. Is it okay for a 250-pound wrestler to hit a woman with the same force as he would hit a man, even if the woman interferes? I wasn't sure then and I'm not sure now. But judging from the response that the column received, I would caution every female valet to think twice before she involves herself physically in another match. The fans would just love to see you ladies get the condiments kicked out of you.



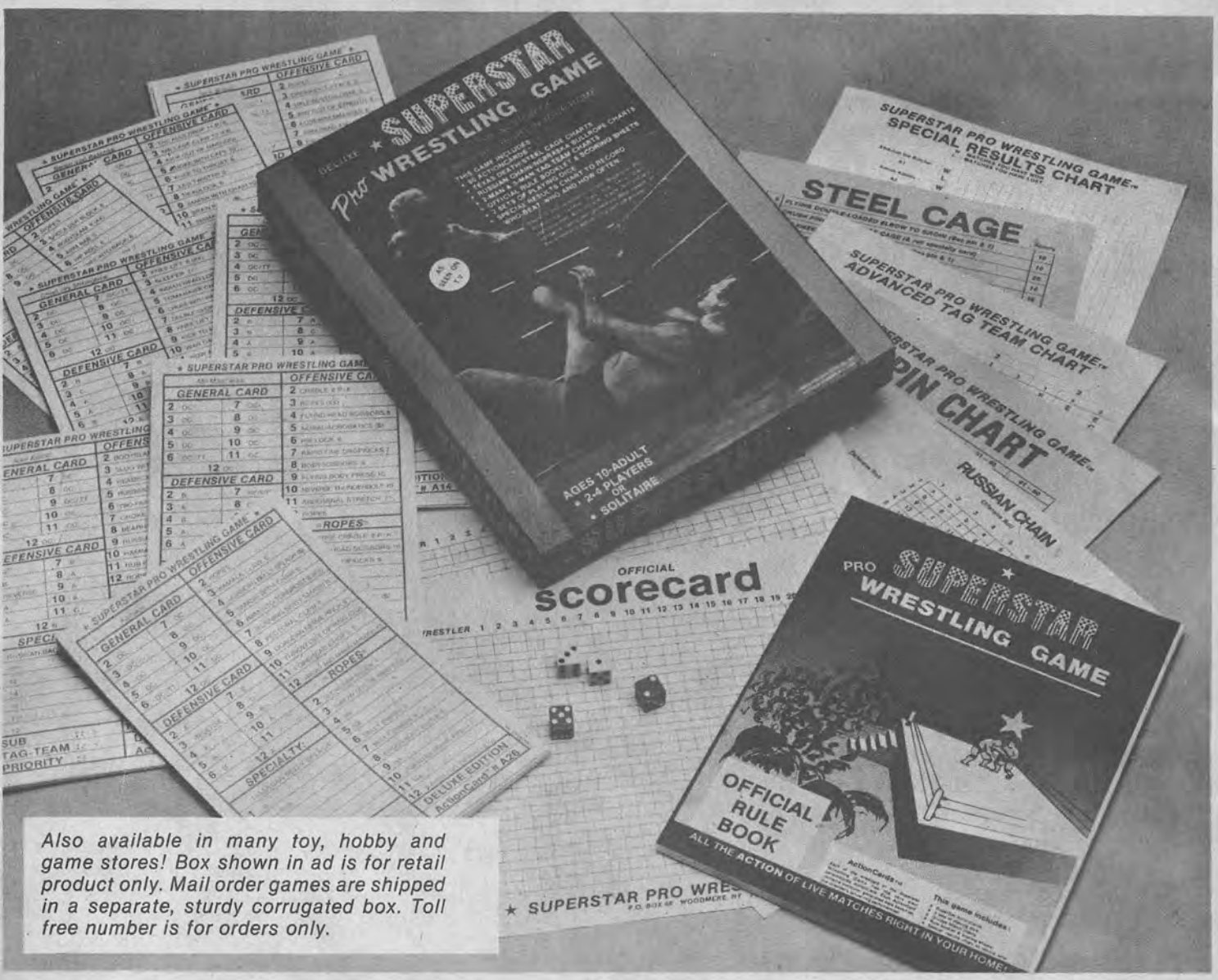
Reader Lewis Reese says he's bored with the Chris Adams-Kevin Von Erich feud. Hunter disagrees. And so do the majority of fans—which is why arenas and stadiums from Texas to New England are filled to see these two sworn enemies wrestle.

Dear Elizabeth,

I have a question for you. Say you're sitting up alone in your room. It's late. On one channel is a movie starring Mel Gibson. On another channel is a movie starring Richard Gere. On another channel is professional wrestling. Which should I watch?—Jenny Hands, Bismark, SD

Dear Jennifer,

Watch half of the Mel Gibson movie, half of the Richard Gere movie, and then dream about wrestling them when you fall asleep. □



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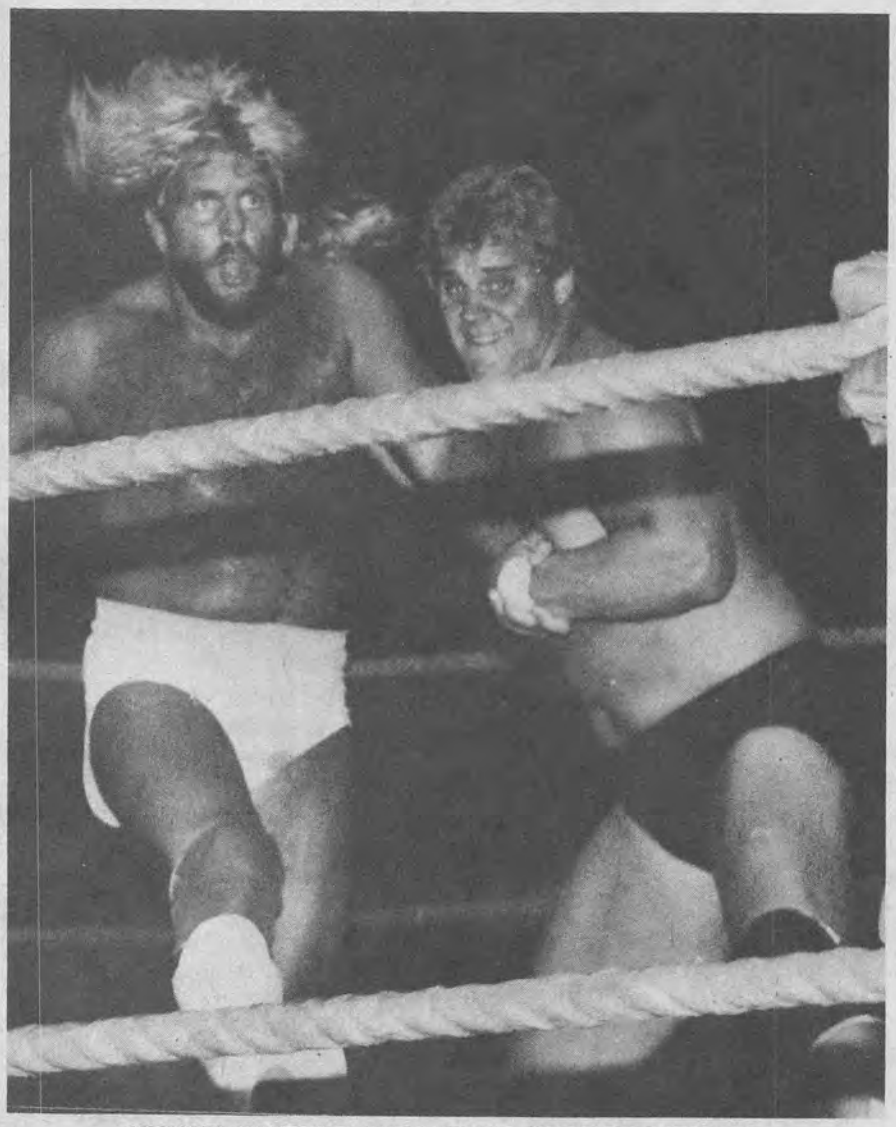
NEWS

With CRAIG PETERS

THE *PWI* T-SHIRT CONTEST



MICHAEL HAYES VS. CURT HENNIG, BY MARK CHESNEY

Congratulations to this month's photo contest winner—Mark Chesney of New Brighton, Minnesota—for his fine action photograph here of Curt Hennig hurling Freebird Michael Hayes into the cornerpost.

"In this match, June 9 at the St. Paul Civic Center, Michael Hayes and Buddy Roberts of The Freebirds defeated Curt and Larry Hennig. Hayes hit Hennig with brass knuckles and pinned him.

"Later that night, Hayes pinned AWA World champion Rick Martel in a non-title match, again using brass knuckles."

For his photograph, Dan wins a free *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* T-shirt.

"In Focus" welcomes any and all fan photos. Each issue, "In Focus" will print the best fan photo of the month, and award that person a *PWI* T-shirt. All photos must be black and white. They become the property of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* and cannot be returned.

A short description of the match along with the name of the arena and the final result of the match would be appreciated with your photo. Send your photo to: In Focus c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* Box 48, Rockville Centre, New York, 11571. And don't forget to include your T-shirt size (small, medium, large, extra large).

Good luck!

THE IDEAL WWF WRESTLING CARD?

In my "On The Road" column in the July 1985 edition of *Inside Wrestling,* I wrote about the WWF's WrestleMania card, the ridiculousness of Billy Martin and Cyndi Lauper and Mr. T being involved, and speculated on possible WWF matches to take place in the future (for example: Sky Low Low teaming with Emmanuel Lewis and Gary Coleman for the world six-man midget title—managed by Herve Villechaize).

I received a lot of mail on that column (seems that these days, *anything* critical about the WWF elicits a lot of mail). The best letter, though, came from Jeff Sharkey of Hortonville, Wisconsin. Since I don't have plans to devote an installment of "On The Road" to reader response to that column, it seemed like a good idea to devote a portion of "In Focus" to some of Jeff's suggestions (and remember these match ideas are, as Jeff says in an accompanying note, "all sorts of ridiculous matches we might see on the WWF wrestling network of shows").

USMC Basic Training Slugfest: Sgt. Slaughter (master of the cobra clutch) vs. Jim Nabors (master of the Gomer Pyle-driver) . . . The Khan's Film Festival, Oriental Dynasty, and Battle Royal: Killer Khan, Kublai Khan, and Gengis Khan vs. Chaka Khan, Madeline Kahn, and James Caan . . . Haircut match: Bob Backlund vs. Jim Neidhardt (loser MUST let his hair grow) . . . well, you get the idea!

RHETORICAL QUESTIONS

It looks like this may become a regular feature of "In Focus"—at least for a little while to come. Mail response has been good, and if you would like to pose some of your own rhetorical questions, send them to: "In Focus" c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* Box 48, Rockville Centre, New York 11571.

. . . What happens to the people who *flunk out* of the Killer Kowalski school for professional wrestling?

. . . Now that he's in the WWF, will Lanny Poffo start wearing his armor again so that he can avoid getting hit in the face with a pie? Would the pie make his helmet rust shut?

. . . With such a variety of names available, how could anyone name their kid Percival Pringle and still be able to face the neighbors? (Wendy Sievert, Black Creek, WI).

. . . If *Pro Wrestling U.S.A.* is supposed to combine the NWA and the AWA, why is it featuring only the AWA? (Stephen Caruso, Columbia, MD).

. . . How can any true wrestling fan support Hulk Hogan as WWF World champion when he involves himself in so many other activities besides wrestling? (Trisha Pedigo, Pilot Point, TX).

. . . Are Ric Flair's bounty payments a business deduction? And if so, how will they be affected by President Reagan's new tax reforms? (Stu Saks, Manging Editor, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated).* □

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

PRESS CONFERENCE OLE ANDERSON

Ole Anderson's wrestling philosophy is to work on one part of an opponent's anatomy throughout the match. Here he delivers an elbowsmash to Dick Slater's already weakened left leg. Ole has taught his cousin Arn the rudiments of the Wrecking Crew.

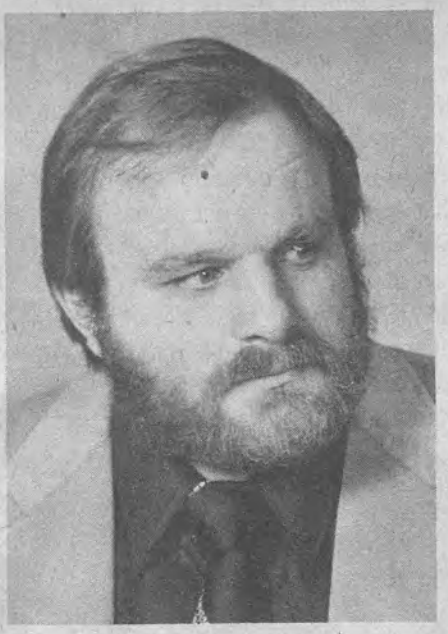
ONE YEAR AGO, Ole Anderson spent each weekend alongside veteran broadcaster Gordon Solie and lent his years of in-the-ring experience to Solie's incisive analysis of Georgia-area matches.

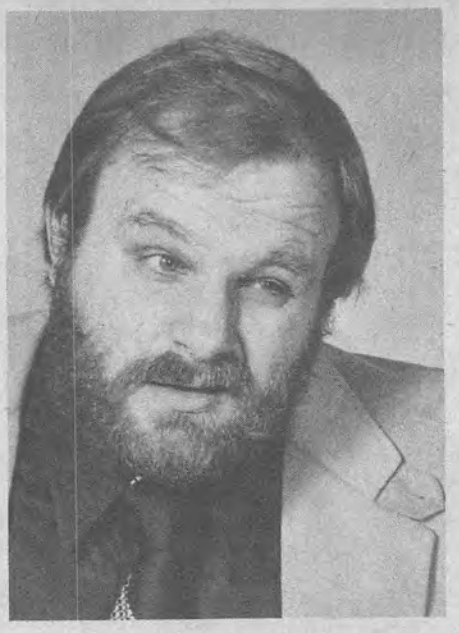
A lot of water has gone under the bridge since then. WTBS seems to have been a revolving door for wrestling programs, with Georgia, WWF, Mid-South, and Mid-Atlantic matches being featured. Finally, WTBS settled on featuring NWA matches on World Championship Wrestling, *and in effect the Georgia area was no more, having been replaced by a combination of mainly Georgia and Mid-Atlantic wrestling.*

Ole Anderson and Gordon Solie were no more as well, having been replaced by Tony Schiavone and David Crockett. This allowed Anderson the opportunity to devote himself full-time to his ring activities, an opportunity he welcomed since his cousin Arn Anderson had come to the World Championship area.

Ole and Arn dubbed themselves "The New Minnesota Wrecking Crew" and established themselves as a tag team force by defeating Thunderbolt Patterson and Manny Fernandez for the National tag team title.

Pro Wrestling Illustrated *editors Bill Apter, Craig Peters, and Stu Saks recently spoke with Ole Anderson following a National tag team title defense against the team of Buzz Sawyer and Dick Slater in Atlanta's Omni.*





"What we do in the ring is to try and take away an opponent's point of support. It's like a kitchen table; saw off a leg, and the thing falls right over."

STU SAKS: I don't know if I really want to say congratulations to you, Ole. You came out of tonight's match with your title intact, but the way you and Arn wrestled was . . .

OLE ANDERSON: It was what? I'll tell you what it was, it was something that The Omni hasn't seen in a long time. It was wrestling, the way the Andersons do it, the way it should be done.

CRAIG PETERS: Which means, in Minnesota Wrecking Crew terms, try and break a man's arm or leg.

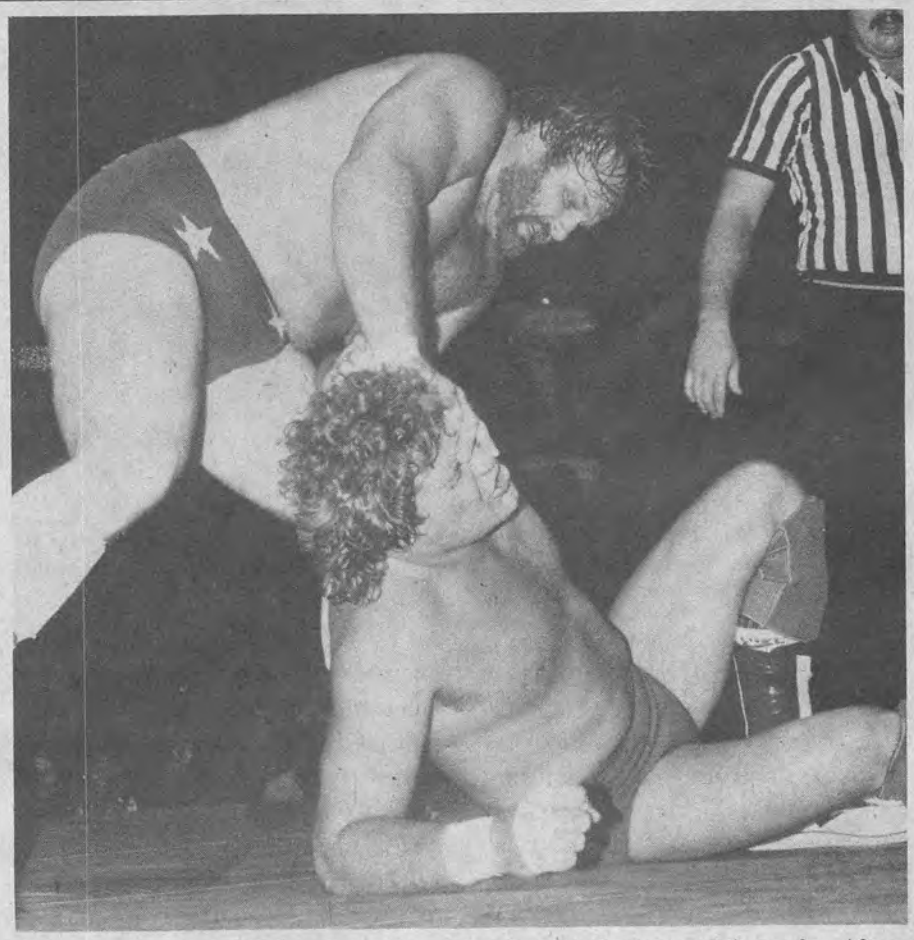
ANDERSON: Not necessarily. That's the picture painted by people who try to deny the talents of Arn and myself. What we do in that ring is to try and take away an opponent's point of support. It's like a kitchen table; saw off a leg, and the thing falls right over. Take away one point of support on an opponent's body and he's easily pinned.

SAKS: Or crippled.

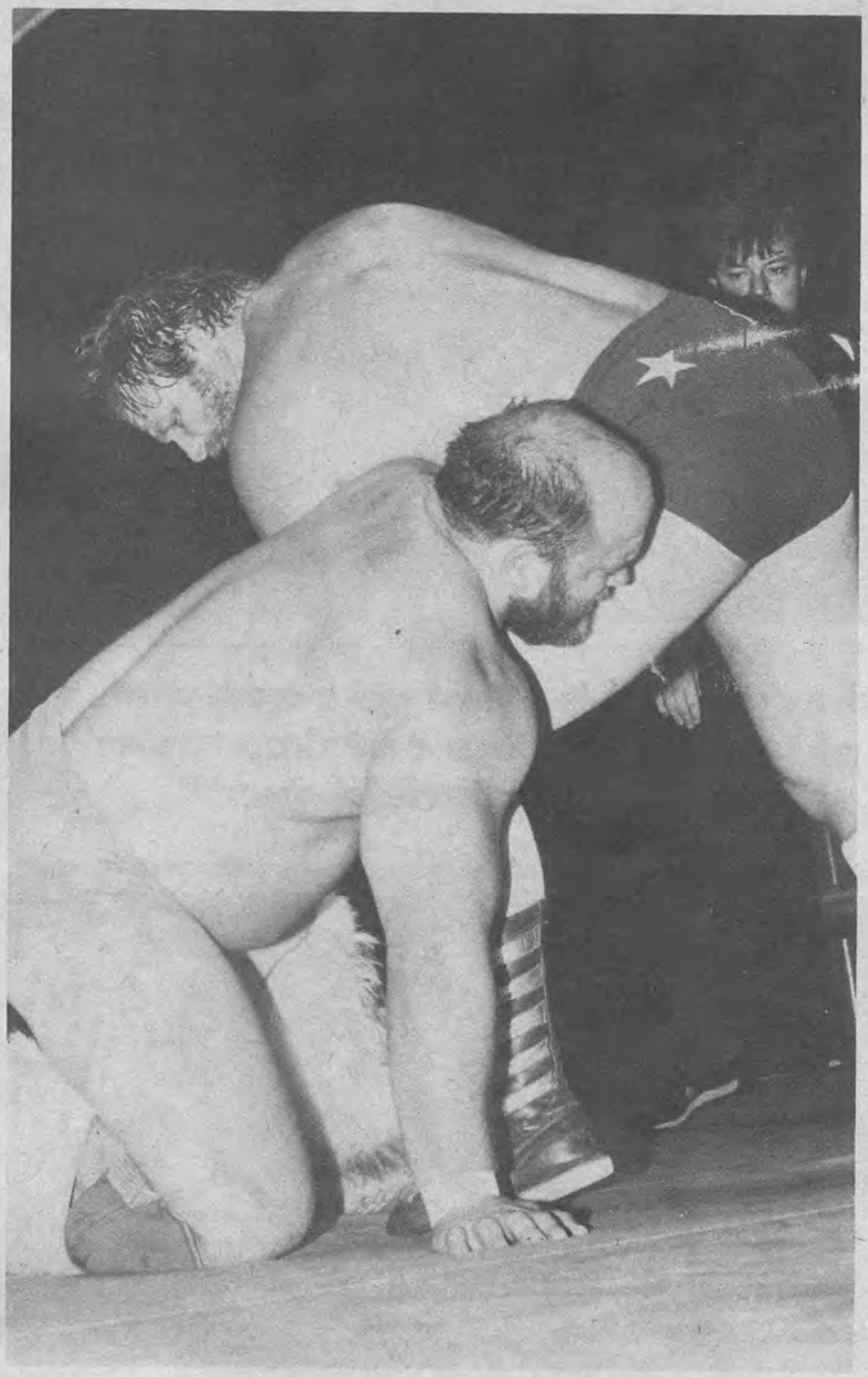
ANDERSON: If a guy is too weak and fragile, he shouldn't be stepping into the ring in the first place.

BILL APTER: I have a few questions on my mind, Ole . . .

ANDERSON: It figures you would,



Anderson grabs a hold of Slater's nose, adding more pain to the already excruciating armbar. After a short retirement from active wrestling, Ole Anderson has returned to the sport more brutal than ever.



Anderson brings Mad Dog Buzz Sawyer to the mat with an armbar. The Andersons' style of wrestling may not be flashy, but it is effective. Ole and his brother Gene are two-time winners of the Tag Team Of The Year award.

Apter.

APTER: . . . and I'm wondering, first of all, if you consider the 1985 version of the Minnesota Wrecking Crew—you and Arn—to be as formidable as the 1975 version—you and Gene.

ANDERSON: **Absolutely. You know, there were times when me and Arn were training that I had a couple of doubts that we would recapture the ferocity of 10 years ago. But we did, and I can safely say that this new Minnesota Wrecking Crew is every bit as powerful, every bit as destructive, every bit as capable as the old Crew. Maybe even more so. And let me say something else about that. Everyone looks at tag team wrestling today and they say that the number one team is The Road Warriors. The Warriors are great, the Warriors are mean, the Warriors won Tag Team of the Year two years in a row. Well, let me tell you something: Me and Gene won tag team of the year twice, back in 1975 and in 1977, at a time when Hawk and Animal were still trying to learn how to jump start their Harleys. And we were the *only* team *ever* to win that honor on two occasions.**

SAKS: Are you claiming that you and Arn could defeat The Road Warriors?

ANDERSON: **I'd sure like for us to give it a shot. I think it'd be damn close, and a hell of a lot closer than Paul Ellering would think it to be.**

Ole and Arn viciously double-team Manny Fernandez. Ole claims to follow only one set of rules: his own. "If a guy is too weak and fragile," he says, "he shouldn't be stepping into the ring in the first place."

PETERS: Another question that I'm sure is on Bill's mind has to do with a man by the name of Ric Flair.

ANDERSON: **The best wrestler in the world today, and you can see the Anderson blood in his style every time he defends that NWA World belt.**

PETERS: But during a recent installment of *World Championship Wrestling,* you and Arn attacked Magnum T.A. . . .

SAKS: From behind I might add.

PETERS: . . . and frankly, it seemed like the kind of attack that was . . . well, any attack from behind is really unnecessary, but it wasn't really a case where Flair was in any great danger of being hurt in a triple-team attempt or anything. Why did you and Arn run in like that?

ANDERSON: First of all, Peters, I never thought you did such a hot job on the "Pro Wrestling Illustrated Press Conferences" with Bill, here, and you're not doing such a hot job today. Now if you'd have paid close attention to that Flair-T.A. match that you're talking about, you'd understand that first of all, it was a 10 minute match where T.A. said he could beat Flair in 10 minutes, Flair said he couldn't, and they put a thousand dollars on it.

APTER: I believe it was the other way around, Ole, that Flair said he could beat T.A. in 10 minutes, and if he didn't T.A. would get the money.

ANDERSON: Same thing. The point I'm trying to make here, if you'd just shut up a second, Apter, is that once the 10 minute time limit was up, T.A. kept beating on Flair, even after Flair had dropped all of his defenses. It was a blatant and unjustified Pearl Harbor, and I had to put an end to it.

SAKS: Oh come on, Ole, you don't really expect us to believe that, do you? If anything was blatant, it was you and Arn trying to cripple Magnum. It's a good thing Buzz Sawyer and Dick Slater ran in to clean the ring out.

ANDERSON: There's two more scum, Sawyer and Slater. I've got plans for the two of them, you know.

SAKS: I'm sure. One final question: What do you think distinguishes The Minnesota Wrecking Crew as being above and apart from any other tag team in wrestling today?

ANDERSON: Well, it's obvious, isn't it? Strength. Determination. Teamwork. We've got everything it takes to be successful. And we've brought the National tag team title back to the level of excellence that it hasn't had for some time. *Ha!* The most absurd thing was when Patterson and Manny Fernandez held the belts. Manny Fernandez? He's the biggest goat in the sport! He lost the National belts to me and Arn, and he lost the NWA World belts to the Koloffs. He's the biggest loser in the sport, and he's going to be having a lot of company soon: Dusty, Slater, Sawyer, and Magnum. *Real* soon. □

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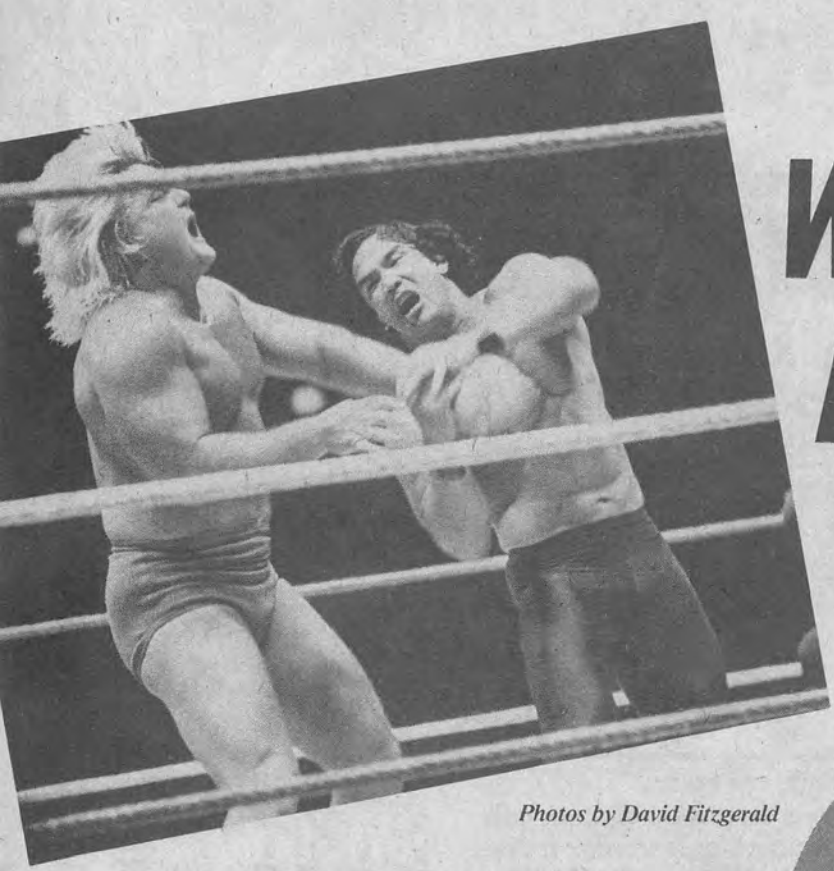
Greg Valentine vs. Rick Steamboat:

AND THE WINNER IS... RODDY PIPER!



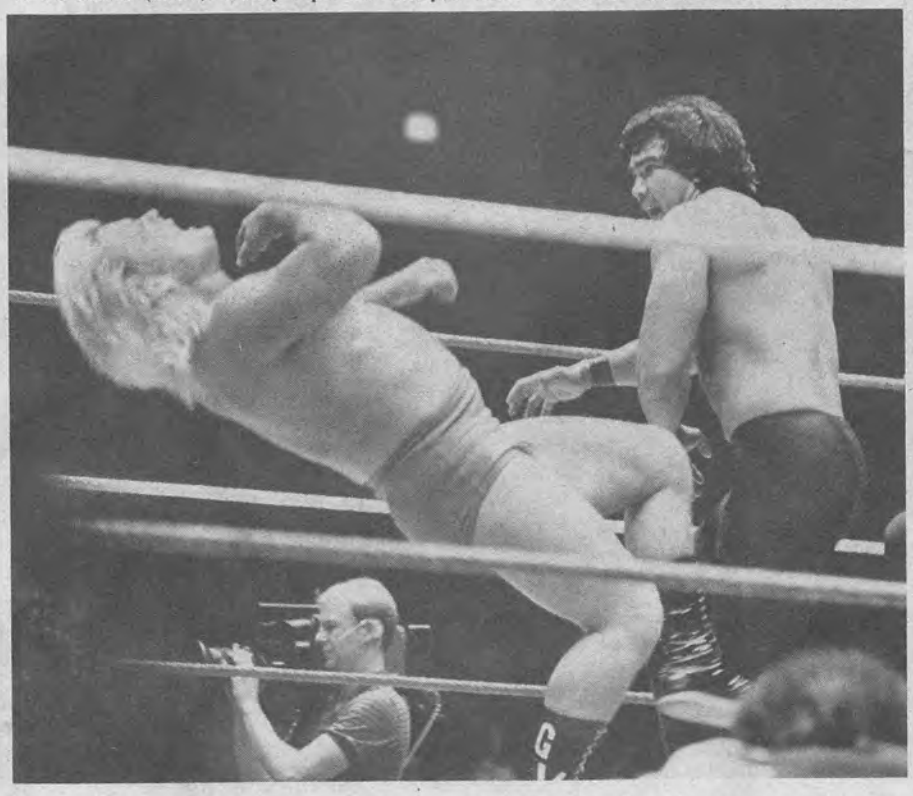
Photos by David Fitzgerald

Why is Roddy Piper smiling? If two of your most hated enemies were tearing each other's throats apart, you'd be smiling, too

FOR THE INVETERATE gambler, nothing is as sweet as the "middle." The middle is the gambler's redemption, his oasis from photo finishes that never went his way, from last-second shots going in at the buzzer, and fast counts that happen only to his men.

The middle works this way: A bettor makes a wager with his bookmaker on the Giants-Mets baseball game, taking the Mets 10 times at odds of 5-13. This means, should the Mets win, the bettor is wagering $50 to win a possi-

Rick Steamboat and Greg Valentine warred for years in the Mid-Atlantic area, and now their feud has reignited in the WWF. In his first shot at Valentine's Intercontinental title, Steamboat's bodyblock is a little sloppy (above) but still effective (right). Standing toe to toe, Steamboat hammers Valentine to the canvas (below). Roddy Piper has had past feuds with both Steamboat and Valentine.



ble $130.

Three hours before the game begins, the bettor gets a phone call from a friend informing him that across town there is a bookie whose odds on that same Giants-Mets game is 5-13 in favor of the Giants. He races downtown and makes the same wager, except this time betting the Giants for $50 with a chance to win back $130.

Thus, no matter who wins, the gambler stands to make his profit. For once in his life the beleaguered gambler enjoys the luxury of a sure thing. His excitement shifts from uncertainty to certainty; his investment becomes strictly blue chip. It is a temporary respite, since it is rare that bookies will offer odds so different from one another, but one embraced nonetheless.

Even rarer is the wrestling middle, but if there is a person to find such a Shangri-la, it's not surprising that his name is Roddy Piper. In 1983, the most violent feud in wrestling was unquestionably the one between Roddy Piper and Greg Valentine. The two went at it with such animal abandon that many fans feared for the wrestlers' lives.

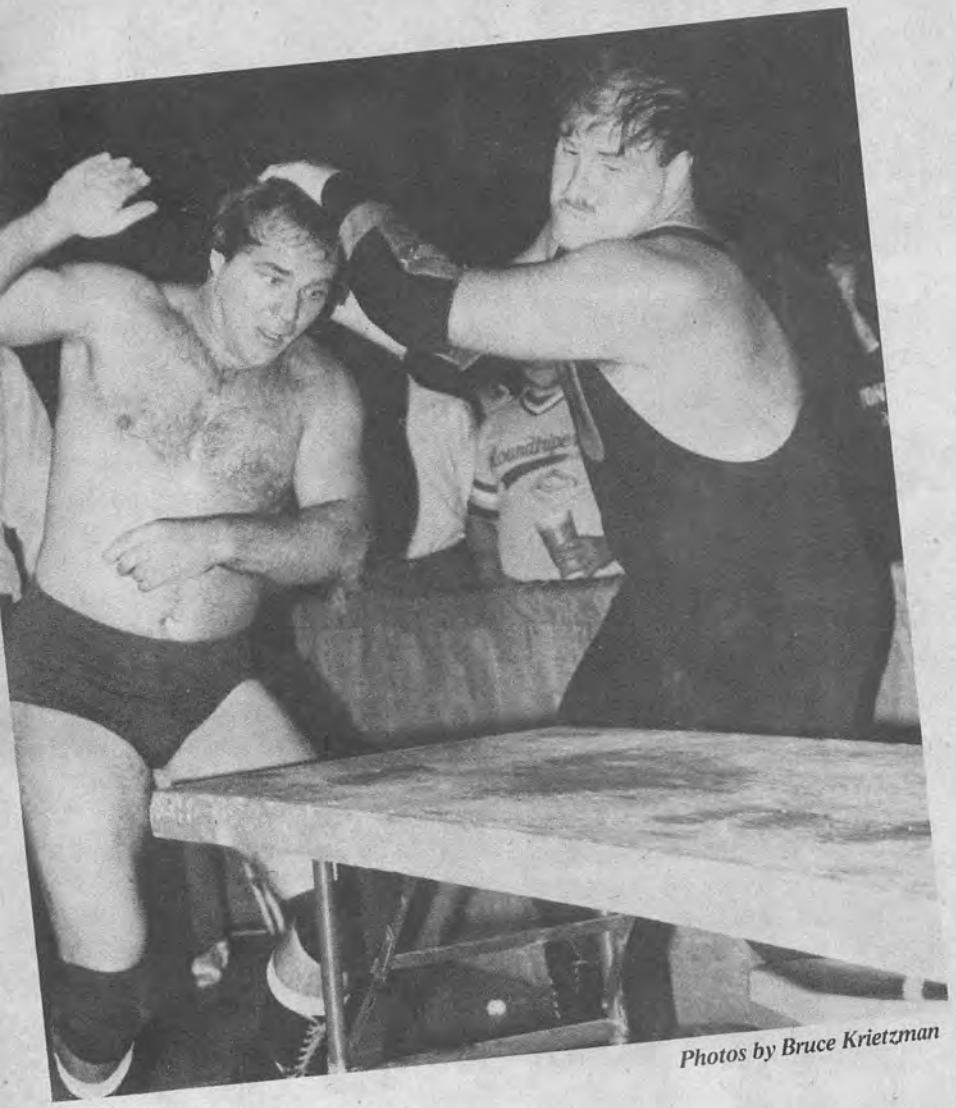
In those days Roddy Piper was wrestling's Mr. Nice Guy, chairman of Piper's Palace, the fan club that every wrestling fan wanted to be part of. In his wars with Valentine, which took place throughout the Carolinas, Piper was buoyed by unanimous fan support, a support that eventually helped him defeat Valentine in their famous November 1983 dog collar match. A few short months later, Piper, as only Piper could, had turned into Public Enemy No. 1, and had become embroiled

(Continued on page 58)

Sgt. Slaughter Defeats Larry Zbyszko:

AMERICA'S WRESTLER ★ BECOMES ★ AMERICAS CHAMPION

After years of fighting America's battles, Sgt. Slaughter has finally won the Americas championship



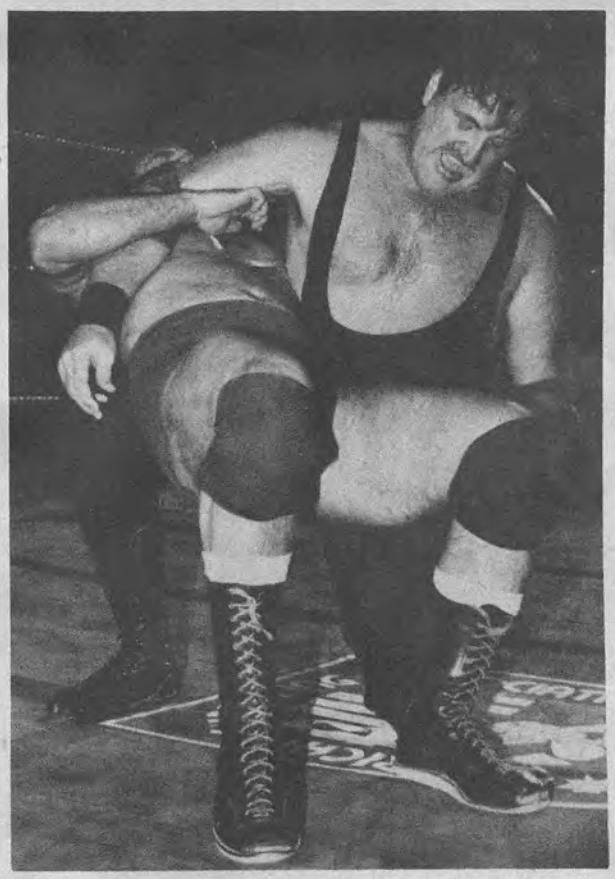
Photos by Bruce Krietzman

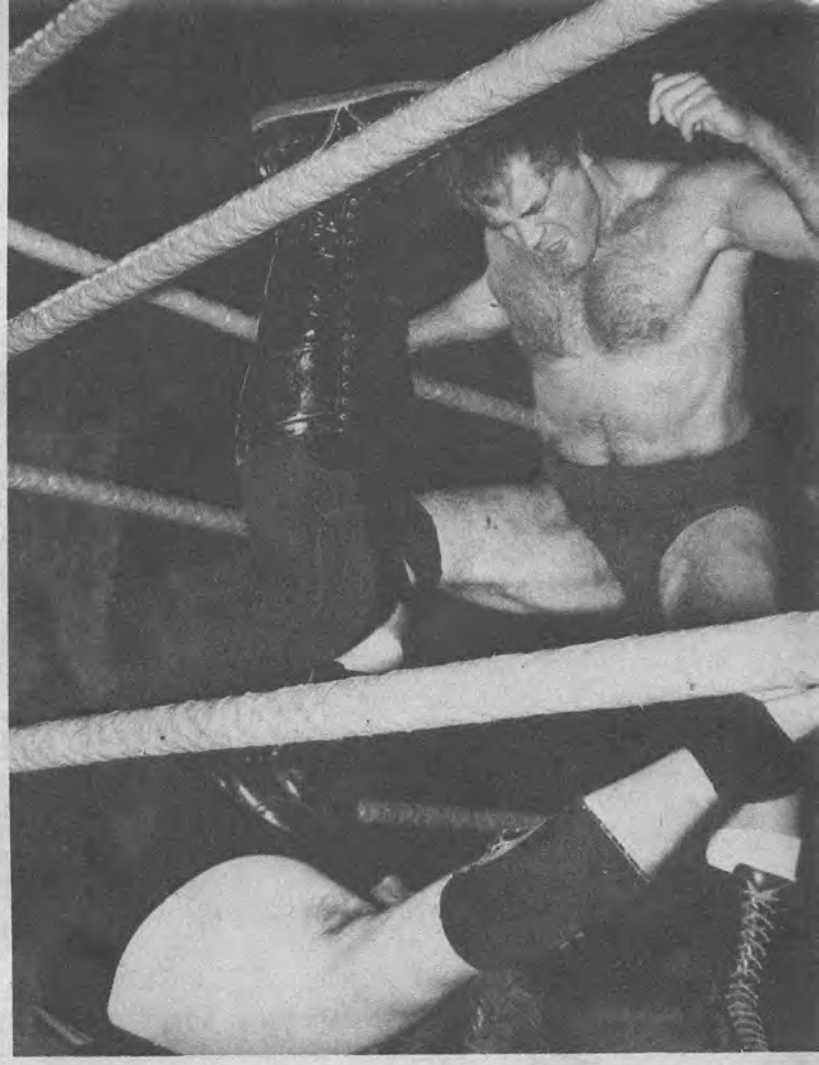
SEEMINGLY STITCHED FROM the same cloth of the American flag, Sgt. Slaughter trods into the ring, a red, white, and blue eagle on a mission. Slaughter has gained national acclaim as this decade's keeper of the torch of freedom. But while the constitution guarantees freedom as the birthright of all Americans, Sgt. Slaughter departs slightly from that venerable concept.

"Freedom is a privilege," Slaughter says proudly. "If you've ever been to a place where a government tells its people what to eat, drink, and think then you would know just how much of a privilege it is. If men like Kamala and The Iron Sheik and Nikita Koloff think that they can come to this country—a country whose men and women have fought and died in the name of freedom—and abuse it for their own advantage, then I guess it's up to me to show them differently.

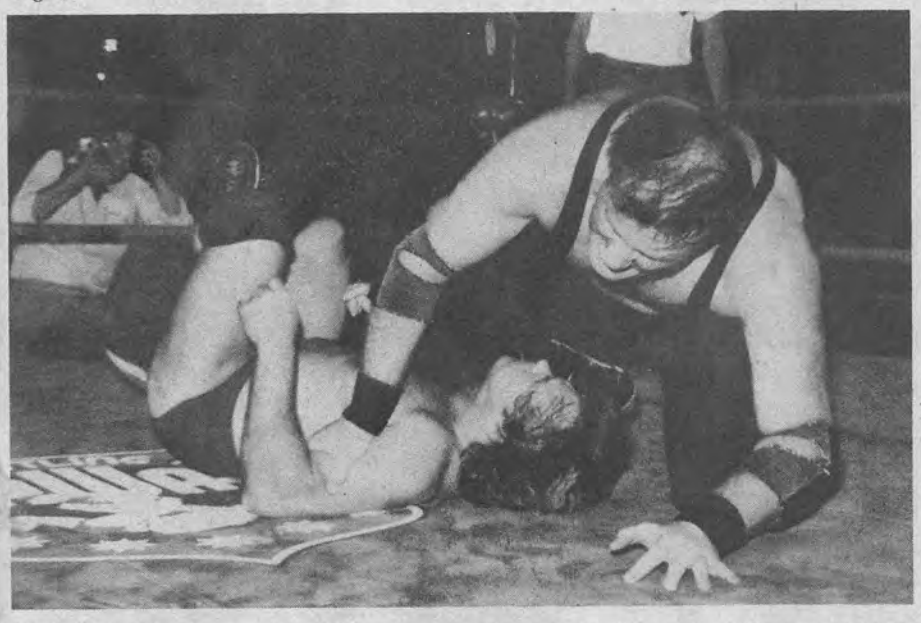
"And as far as I'm concerned, there are plenty of natural-born citizens who don't deserve the luxury of living in these great United States. And since I can't deport Larry Zbyszko, I'll just try to make life here for him as miserable as possible."

While our Founding Fathers might have a little problem with the Sarge's form of patriotism, they no doubt would defer to his judgement about Larry Zbyszko. Zbyszko is one of wrestling's most disrespectful and rulebreaking performers. His feuds with The Tonga Kid, Bob Backlund, and Bruno Sammartino all smack of the same brutal and careless style. His contempt for the safety of his opponents has been the hallmark of Zbyszko's career, and has turned him into one of the most feared grapplers in the sport. Many fans and critics mourned the day that Zbyszko won the Americas tournament and captured the





Slaughter's Americas title victory over Zbyszko was thrilling. The Sarge softened his opponent with a backbreaker (above) before leveling him with the Slaughter cannon (below). Along the way, Slaughter had to withstand this painful stomping by Zbyszko (right).



championship.

Slaughter harbors a particularly deep grudge against Zbyszko for a different reason. He despises Zbyszko for his treatment of Bruno Sammartino. "To me, Bruno Sammartino is the living example of the greatness of America," said Slaughter. "He came over from another country, poor and without a skill, but loaded with desire. Through hard work and persistence he became a wrestling champion and an idol to millions. Only in America could a man like Bruno turn desire into success. We enjoy opportunities here that people in other countries can only dream about.

"When Zbyszko turned on Bruno he also turned on the American Dream. The man has no respect for anything. It hurts me to call him a fellow American."

Last month in Chicago, Slaughter took the appropriate steps and ended Zbyszko's reign of terror in the AWA. His defeat of Zbyszko was as swift and certain as the American invasion of Grenada. Shucking any pretense of scientific wrestling, Slaughter responded to each of Zbyszko's blows with two of his own. He tossed the champ around the ring as if Zbyszko was a featherweight, not the 250 pounds of sinister grappler that had ruled the Americas title with an iron fist.

Slaughter resoundingly silenced those critics who in the past had accused him of not fighting as hard against American wrestlers as he did against foreigners. When Zbyszko ran from the ring in an attempt to draw a disqualification and retain his

(Continued on page 62)

RIC FLAIR: THE ARROGANCE OF GREATNESS

By Craig Peters

Currently in the midst of his third NWA World title reign, Ric Flair is considered by many to be the yardstick by which all other wrestlers are measured. Ask Flair about it, though, and he'll tell you that nobody else compares to him

THE FILET MIGNON was cooked medium rare, just the way I like it. In a silver champagne bucket next to my seat, a half-empty bottle of Dom Perignon, vintage 1978, nuzzled itself comfortably into the chipped ice that kept it cool throughout the meal.

"Nice, isn't it, Craig? Fine food, fine champagne. Is the steak all right? Francois, the chef, is a friend of mine. I dine here often. This is the most exclusive restaurant in both Carolinas."

Ric Flair was playing the gracious host, and I didn't mind a bit. After all, it isn't every day that the NWA World heavyweight champion offers to buy me dinner. All I wanted was about a half-hour of his time for an interview; Flair said we'd talk over the meal. Fine by me.

As I looked across the table, I thought about how the well-dressed gentleman in front of me compared with the strutting and snarling champion seen each week on WTBS' *World Championship Wrestling.*

The gentleman is calm, while the champion is boastful; the gentleman is reserved and businesslike, while the champion is openly aggressive; the gentleman is gracious when a beautiful woman approaches our table to ask for an autograph, while few individuals come within arm's distance of the champion before or after a match.

I jumped at the golden opportunity to ask Ric Flair the gentleman his opinions about Ric Flair the champion.

"There's no inconsistency, as you seem to imply, Craig," Flair replied. "In fact, if anything, I would say that there is a remarkably stable consistency between Ric Flair the champion and Ric Flair, the man out of the ring. The common denominator in both cases, my friend, is excellence, plain and simple.

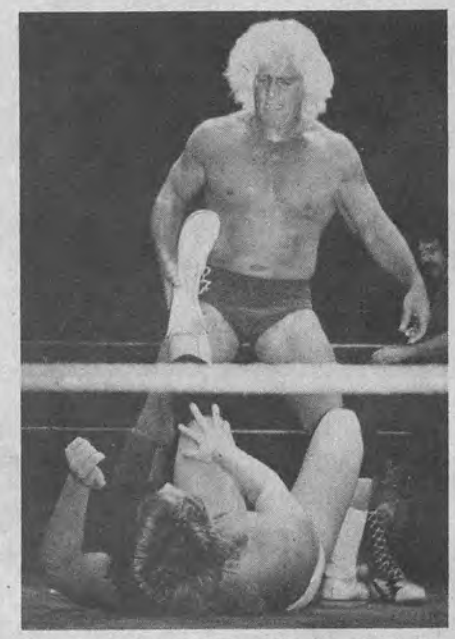
"Take this meal, for example," Flair continued. "This is the finest

Ric Flair wrestles many different types of wrestlers throughout the world. Here, his brawl with Freebird Michael Hayes gets out of the ring—and out of hand. Flair can brawl or wrestle scientifically with equal success.

beef available anywhere in the Mid-Atlantic states. This champagne costs $110 per bottle."

I reiterated my appreciation of Flair's generosity.

"The money isn't the point. The point is that this is the *best.* There's a reason for this. We are enjoying the best here tonight because I am the best that professional wrestling has to offer. I don't settle for second best; I never have, and I never will. That's why I eat the finest foods and drink the finest champagne. That's why I wrestle the top contenders that the sport has to offer. That's why I choose to compete in



Flair stands above a fallen Mike Von Erich during a match in Texas. Some fans may be turned off by Flair's arrogance, but others recognize him for his immense talent.

the National Wrestling Alliance, the oldest and largest sanctioning body in professional wrestling. We're talking the best in every respect."

As the waitress filled both our glasses with more champagne, I suggested—half-jokingly and half-seriously—that perhaps Flair was being a bit arrogant in his assessment of himself. He smiled.

"You've heard the old saying, 'It's hard to be humble when you're as great as I am? Well, I only know of one man in this world to which that saying applies 100 percent, and

The champion in action against several different wrestlers with wildly different styles. Flair kneedrops Kerry Von Erich (above left), pins Chris Adams (above), and sends Harley Race to the buckle (below). Night after night, Flair shows why he is the sport's number one wrestler.

that's me, daddy. If a person has all the credentials for greatness, I believe he has the right to make those credentials known. And if *anybody* has the credentials for greatness in professional wrestling, you're looking at him, brother.

"Hey, I've got three NWA World title reigns to my credit," Flair continued. "That's nothing to sneer at. Sure, Dusty Rhodes is a two-time champion, but how long has he held the title all told? About three months. Harley Race is long past his prime. Kerry Von Erich was a flash in the pan. So was Tommy Rich.

"And look at the big guns in the NWA today. First of all you have U.S. champion Magnum T.A., who has no respect for what being a champion means; he has no pride in his personal appearance and in being a representative for the NWA. You saw what he did to the tailored suit I had prepared for him. Then you have Nikita Koloff, who is a Russian strongman with little or no experience against a top-flight competitor."

I looked at Flair, and my observation of minutes earlier disappeared. His natural arrogance was spilling out, and the distinction between gentleman and champion was blurring considerably.

"You know, people talk about the three major champions, and they make comparisons between us," Flair said. "Hulk Hogan—well, Hogan is a weightlifter and a social butterfly, and he's got an interesting lifestyle, but the only two wrestling moves he knows are the legdrop and the elbowsmash. I could place him in the figure-four leglock inside of 10 minutes and probably come up with a submission.

"As for Rick Martel, I respect his scientific wrestling knowledge, but the kid is a whole milk and white bread bore. Frankly, he hasn't got the experience or the drive or the attitude that makes a real champion. I'd like to wrestle Martel, and I was hoping that the *Pro Wrestling U.S.A.* group would put the match together, but I don't think it's going to happen.

"So, logically, it stands to reason that I am the singlemost formidable man in the sport today," Flair concluded. "I am the man that everyone would like to beat. I am the man with the 10 pounds of gold around my waist. I set the pace everyone in professional wrestling has to follow. If anybody wants a piece of me, daddy, they can come and get it. But let them be warned that a piece of Ric Flair means a lesson in humiliation and defeat.

"That's what makes me the number one man in professional wrestling today."

As I finished my filet mignon, I thought about the difference between false arrogance and justified arrogance. Guess which one applies to Ric Flair. □

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
T.V. SPORTS

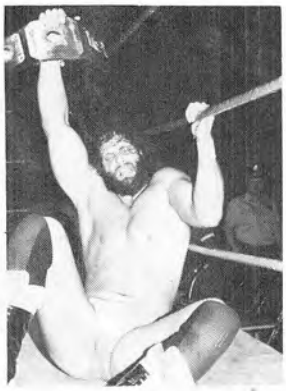
CLOSE-UP

RANDY SAVAGE

RANDY "MACHO MAN" Savage is a brutal ring tactician on the brink of superstardom . . . Stands 6'1½" tall and weighs in at 235 pounds . . . His most effective moves are the flying elbowsmash and the piledriver . . . Born Randy Poffo on November 15, 1952, in Columbus, Ohio . . . Is the son of legendary high-flying grappler Angelo Poffo . . . Grew up in Ohio, where he attended Downers Grove High School . . . Often attended wrestling matches to watch his rulebreaking father compete . . . Although Angelo Poffo was a rulebreaker in the pro rings, he was very careful about training his sons in the basics of the sport . . . Randy often wrestled with his younger brother, Lanny . . . Father Angelo continued to guide his sons in the basics of the sport, and helped them blend their natural athletic skills with the rigors of the mat sport . . . Like most young boys, Randy played all sports, but he excelled in baseball . . . Played on the high school baseball team . . . Hit over .500 in high school league play . . . Decided at the time that he wanted to make a career in pro ball . . . Immediately after high school graduation, Randy secured a tryout with the St. Louis Cardinals organization . . . Signed with the Cardinals' minor league system in 1971 . . . Bounced around the minor leagues for about five years . . . Played with the Cincinnati Reds and Chicago White Sox organizations . . . While playing minor league baseball, Randy developed a longing to step into the wrestling ring as a pro . . . Because of baseball contractual obligations, Randy was unable to engage in any other pro sport activities . . . Circumvented contract problems by donning a mask during the off-season and wrestling as "The Spider" . . . Made his profesional debut against Paul Christy in Clenbard, Illinois, in November 1973 . . . Continued to wrestle as The Spider for about three years, precariously balancing wrestling and baseball careers . . . Wrestled in the Florida and Georgia areas . . . Had a lot of trouble with heavyweight opponents due to the fact he had to keep his weight down around 175 for baseball . . . The strain of dual careers proved to be too much as Randy found he was competent at both but excelling at neither . . . In 1976 stopped playing baseball and devoted himself to a full-time wrestling career . . . Wrestled throughout the Florida and Georgia areas . . . While in Georgia in 1976, Randy Poffo was given the name Randy Savage by Ole Anderson because, Ole said, "he wrestled like a savage!" . . . Randy left Georgia to wrestle in the Southeast area . . . While there, teamed with his brother Lanny Poffo and captured the Southeastern tag team championship . . . The duo held the title for only a few months . . . After losing the belts, the two brothers went their seperate ways . . . While Lanny and Randy would come together and cooperate with each other from time to time because of their family ties, their conflicting ring styles and philosophies generally keeps them apart and on their own career paths . . . In 1978, Lanny Poffo won the International Championship Wrestling world title . . . Randy went to the ICW area and demanded a shot at his own brother for the title . . . On July 21, 1979, Randy beat his brother Lanny for the title . . . Successfully defended the title for nearly four years . . . Ironically, Randy's career came full-circle in 1983 when Paul Christy, the man Savage beat in his pro debut as The Spider, beat Savage for the ICW championship . . . Savage then went to the Mid-Southern area where he wrestled under the management of Jimmy Hart . . . Held the Mid-Southern title on several occasions, trading ownerships of the belt several times with Jerry Lawler . . . In late 1984, Savage once again wrestled his brother Lanny—this time, in a completely empty Mid-South Coliseum in Memphis with Jerry Lawler as referee . . . The match was held exclusively for *Wrestling* 85, and was published in that magazine's Spring 1985 issue . . . Savage's most recent Mid-Southern title reign stretched from May 16, 1985 (when he won the title from Jerry Oske) until June 3, 1985 (when he lost the title to Jerry Lawler) . . . Left the Mid-Southern area without a rematch and went to the WWF . . . WWF managers are currently engaged in a bidding war for Savage's services . . . Some WWF insiders feel that Jimmy Hart has the inside track on winning the bidding war because of his previous experience in managing Savage . . . Savage hopes to soon gain a title shot against WWF World champion Hulk Hogan. □

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
T.V. SPORTS
RANDY SAVAGE
The Macho Man

CLOSE-UP



GREATEST MATCH

July 21, 1979 vs. Lanny Poffo. Savage's greatest match occurred, ironically, against his brother in New Brunswick, Canada. Savage defeated Poffo for the International Championship Wrestling belt which he defended successfully for almost four years.

TOUGHEST OPPONENT

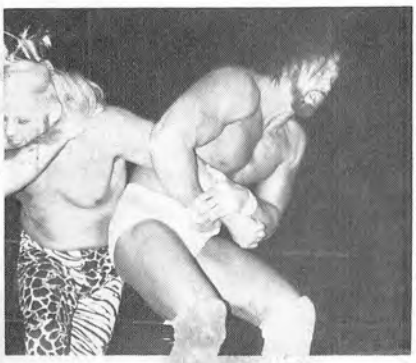
Jerry Lawler. Savage and Lawler have engaged in several of the most rabid bloodbaths in Mid-Southern history. At stake usually was the Mid-Southern heavyweight title. But whether a title was on the line or not, the two men fought each other with a fury that chilled any fan who sat witness.

FAVORITE MANEUVER

The flying elbowsmash. Savage's style—his quickness, great strength, and tremendous anticipation—turns the elbowsmash into a devastating finishing weapon. The power of Savage hurling through the air, elbow extended to a deadly point, all but guarantees the end for his opponent.

MOST HATED OPPONENT

Exotic Adrian Street. Street's effeminate mannerisms, his preoccupation with fashion and make-up, and his campy style and strut contradict everything that Randy "Macho Man" Savage stands for. Savage has expressed his animosity toward Street in very certain terms in the ring.



Scouting Report

A NO-HOLDS-BARRED LOOK AT THE WORLD CLASS AREA

In this feature, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* will examine the relative strengths and weaknesses of wrestling's top stars. There will be no punches pulled as the sport's athletes undergo the harshest scrutiny anywhere in the wrestling world

KEVIN VON ERICH

HOME TOWN: Denton, TX
WEIGHT: 239
YEARS AS PRO: 7
RATING: No. 4 in World Class

STRENGTHS:

- Speed. Kevin's light weight and considerable strength allows him to move with pantherlike quickness.
- Exceptional leg development. Powerful dropkicks highlight a sensational aerial attack. Can vertical leap an impressive 42 inches and slam-dunk a basketball backwards.
- Fearlessness. Will take risks without regard to the possibilty of personal injury.

WEAKNESSES:

- Is the oldest of the Von Erich brothers. As such, Kevin feels responsible for his brothers, which often interferes with his own needs.
- Weakened by his feud with Chris Adams. Kevin has suffered several physical injuries over the course of the lengthy war, and is unquestionably fatigued mentally as well.

OTHER COMMENTS: Voted *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* "Man of the Year" for 1984 . . . Enjoys working with underpriviliged and handicapped children . . . Scuba dives in his spare time . . . During first trip outside Texas in 1979, defeated Dick Murdoch for Missouri title, and held the championship for five months.

OUTLOOK FOR '85: If Kevin's feud with Chris Adams doesn't come to an end soon, it could cause him irreparable damage physically, psychologically, and in career terms.

KERRY VON ERICH

HOME TOWN: Denton, TX
WEIGHT: 260
YEARS AS PRO: 7
RATING: No. 6 in Top 10; No. 8 in NWA; No. 3 in World Class; No. 3 in Missouri

STRENGTHS:

- Conditioning. Devoted to training, Kerry is possibly the best-conditioned athlete in all of wrestling.
- Championship experience. Having tasted the NWA World title, Kerry knows what it takes to be the best.
- Balanced attack. Kerry is a superb tactician with excellent scientific, aerial, and even brawling skills.

WEAKNESSES:

- Depends too much on claw. Often he will gear his attack to the application of his favorite hold and he lets opportunities to use other holds slip by.
- Obsessed with regaining NWA title. Kerry has spent too much time in 1985 wrestling Ric Flair; he runs the risk of permanently altering his style so that he can defeat one man.

OTHER COMMENTS: Known as "The Modern-Day Warrior" . . . Voted 1984's Most Popular Wrestler of the Year . . . His May 6, 1984, title victory over Ric Flair was voted 1984's Match of the Year . . . Held the NWA title for 18 days.

OUTLOOK FOR '85: Kerry still wants Ric Flair's NWA World title, but he's got to replace his unhealthy obsession for the belt with a healthy (and less frenzied, more considered) desire to be champion. If that happens, he could successfully unseat Flair a second time.

MIKE VON ERICH

HOME TOWN: Denton, TX
WEIGHT: 220
YEARS AS PRO: 2
RATING: No. 9 in World Class

STRENGTHS:
- Training. Being taught by Kerry and Kevin Von Erich is the best background anyone could hope for.
- Extreme self-confidence. Many of Mike's victories have been against top-flight competitors, providing him with a self-assurance rare in someone his age.

WEAKNESSES:
- Too much too fast. Surpassing rookie accomplishments could place undue pressure on himself.
- Injury prone. Has been hurt in the shoulder (by The Freebirds and Killer Brooks) and claw hand (by Rip Oliver).
- Too many comparisons to David Von Erich. Starting his career virtually at the time of his brother's death, he is pressured to live up to David's unfulfilled promise.

OTHER COMMENTS: Won the World Class six-man and American titles in rookie year . . . Voted 1984's Rookie of the Year . . . Has already been involved in a series of feuds, including wars against Gino Hernandez and Rip Oliver . . . Has dedicated himself to bulking up and improving his physique.

OUTLOOK FOR '85: Mike should feel he is under no pressure. He should devote himself to physical training and sparring with his brothers while honing that training in the ring against middle-level/lower-risk World Class opposition.

GINO HERNANDEZ

HOME TOWN: Houston, TX
WEIGHT: 224
YEARS AS PRO: 11
RATING: No. 9 in NWA; No. 2 in World Class

STRENGTHS:
- Great experience. For a wrestler of his relative youth, Hernandez possesses excellent experience against some of wrestling's toughest competitors.
- Stamina and recuperative powers. Is able to absorb punishment without losing much of his offensive effectiveness.

WEAKNESSES:
- Enormous ego. Feels that he deserves success, and isn't always willing to work for it.
- Lack of dedication. Has shown this in past by leaving wrestling to go to Hollywood to pursue a screen career.
- Lack of concentration during matches. Has a tendency to bicker with the fans rather than concentrate on his opponent.

OTHER COMMENTS: Known as "Gorgeous Gino" and "The Handsome Half-Breed" . . . Once had Nickla Roberts as his valet . . . Only man ever to concurrently hold World Class American, Texas, and tag team championships . . . Currently holds the World Class Texas title, and one half of the World Class tag team title (with Adams).

OUTLOOK FOR '85: Hernandez's ego too often undermines his achievements. His lust for glory may rip apart the successful tag team of Hernandez and Adams, or it may force him to try and take away Adams' American title.

CHRIS ADAMS

HOME TOWN: Stratford, England
WEIGHT: 225
YEARS AS PRO: 7
RATING: No. 8 in Top 10; No. 5 in NWA; No. 1 in World Class

STRENGTHS:
- Judo background. Adams' martial arts training provides him with superb mobility, a widely varied attack, and a most devastating maneuver in the superkick.
- European background provides an excellent scientific knowledge that he uses in conjuction with American catch-as-catch-can style.

WEAKNESSES:
- Too many enemies. Is the only person in the World Class area who can count the Von Erichs *and* Gary Hart among his opponents.
- Small head. Boasting a hat size of just 6½, Adams is too easily the victim of the Von Erich clawhold.

OTHER COMMENTS: Has spent 1985 high atop the Most Hated ratings . . . Once had Sunshine as his valet . . . Taking on Gary Hart as his manager was the beginning of the end of his relationship with the Von Erichs . . . Fired Hart early in 1985 . . . Is the current World Class American champion.

OUTLOOK FOR '85: Adams will defend his American title while at the same time attempt to gain title shots against NWA champ Ric Flair and continue his feud with Kevin Von Erich. That's too much for any one man.

SCOTT CASEY

HOME TOWN: San Antonio, TX
WEIGHT: 242
YEARS AS PRO: 13
RATING: No. 8 in World Class

STRENGTHS:
- Improved physique. Since coming from the Southwest area, Casey has obviously improved his strength, stamina, and muscular definition.
- Texas tough. Never backs down from any opponent or battle, no matter what the risk of personal injury may be.

WEAKNESSES:
- One-dimensional offensive attack. Tends to fall into a brawling style, and needs to nurture his technical ability.
- Defensive arsenal. Takes a lot of punishment in his matches; needs to improve his counter-wrestling abilities.
- Lack of varied opposition. Despite many years as a pro, has spent virtually all of this time in Texas.

OTHER COMMENTS: Was trained by Dory Funk Sr. . . . Possesses a very good sleeperhold . . . Almost lost all hearing in his left ear when he was attacked with a cowbell by Tully Blanchard in 1981 . . . Has dedicated himself to Sunshine's campaign to clean up the World Class area.

OUTLOOK FOR '85: Casey's association with Sunshine, which is credited with having helped run Jim Cornette and his stable out of Texas, will likely bring him to challenge recent Texas returnee Killer Brooks—particularly since Brooks has captured the World Class TV title from Casey.

KILLER BROOKS

HOME TOWN: Waxahachie, TX
WEIGHT: 235
YEARS AS PRO: 14
RATING: No. 6 in World Class

STRENGTHS:
- Unmatched stamina. Brooks can sustain a fiery brawling pace over the course of a lengthy match.
- Killer instinct. Has the hunger to defeat his opponent, and never holds himself back in the attempt to do so.
- Knows his limitations. Has difficulty formulating a battle plan, and wisely took on Gary Hart as his manager upon returning to the World Class area..

WEAKNESSES:
- Lacks size and strength. At a mere 235 pounds, Brooks lacks the bulk to match his desire.
- Recklessness. Brawling tendencies open him up for opponent's attack and makes him prone to disqualification.
- Complete lack of scientific style. Brooks is an alley-brawler, and displays little or no technical knowledge in his matches.

OTHER COMMENTS: Is not afraid to absorb punishment for the sake of inflicting pain on his opponent . . . Has earned the wrath of the Von Erichs by separating Mike Von Erich's shoulder . . . Currently holds the World Class TV championship.

OUTLOOK FOR '85: Brooks' manager, Gary Hart, may try to team Brooks with One Man Gang in tag team competition. This would be a mistake, as Brooks is a natural singles brawler, and tends to be most successful when he can lure his opponent into a virtual street fight.

KABUKI

HOME TOWN: Singapore
WEIGHT: 252
YEARS AS PRO: 15
RATING: No. 7 in World Class

STRENGTHS:
- Mysterious green fog. Only Kabuki knows from where it originates, but it seems to have an acidic burning effect when sprayed in an opponent's eyes.
- Martial arts background. Kabuki is reportedly a high-level master of ju-jitsu, Tae-kwan-do karate, and Chuan-fa karate.
- Self-discipline. Kabuki possesses the psychological strength that comes with martial arts mastery.

WEAKNESSES:
- Pent-up anger. Kabuki still carries within him the emotional pain of having been severely scarred in the face.
- In terms of pure physical strength, is perhaps the weakest wrestler in the World Class area.
- Bad on the mat. Once Kabuki is taken off his feet, his martial arts knowledge is virtually useless.

OTHER COMMENTS: Was signed by Gary Hart in 1972 during a tour of Asia, and came to America shortly thereafter . . . Wears makeup to cover hideous facial scars suffered 10 years ago in a "hot coals match" in India.

OUTLOOK FOR '85: Though once managed by Gary Hart, Kabuki has allied himself with Sunshine. Kabuki will undoubtedly take pleasure in trying to humiliate the man who once guided his career—unless Hart manages to strike a financial deal with Kabuki and take him away from Sunshine.

ONE MAN GANG

HOME TOWN: Chicago
WEIGHT: 468
YEARS AS PRO: 8
RATING: No. 5 in World Class

STRENGTHS:
- Difficult to place in hold. OMG's girth prevents opponents from applying most scientific moves.
- Street-tough. Raised on Halstead St. in Chicago, OMG possesses the hardened roughness of street gangs.
- Superb bearhug. Few opponents can break the 468-pound giant's viselike grip.

WEAKNESSES:
- Too slow. OMG finds it extremely difficult to move his enormous frame around the ring with any real speed.
- Very independent. Often bickers with his manager, Gary Hart; lack of a unified attack leads to costly match errors.
- Cuts easily. OMG is overly susceptible to facial lacerations.

OTHER COMMENTS: Carries an enomous chain into the ring with him . . . Suffered a loss to Kerry Von Erich in Texas Stadium on May 5, 1985, a loss that cost his manager Gary Hart his hair and increased tension between them.

OUTLOOK FOR '85: This may be the time for One Man Gang to turn a weakness into a strength and exercise his independence: Once Hart has used OMG for his revenge against Chris Adams, OMG may no longer be of use to his manager. Gang needs to develop a greater purpose for himself than revenge.

BRIAN ADIDAS

HOME TOWN: Denton, TX
WEIGHT: 238
YEARS AS PRO: 6
RATING: No. 10 in World Class

STRENGTHS:
- Constantly trying to improve himself. Adidas is aware of where his weaknesses lie, and concentrates on eliminating them.
- Varied attack. Is able to adapt his style to that of his opponent.
- Seldom discouraged. Has the ability to bounce back after a defeat with little or no loss of enthusiasm and determination.

WEAKNESSES:
- Too close to Von Erichs. Living in the shadow of wrestling's first family may see Adidas wind up as resentful of their success as Chris Adams is.
- Lacks a strong finishing maneuver in his repertoire.
- Tends to wrestle over his head. Takes too many matches against opponents who presently outclass him.

OTHER COMMENTS: Attended grade school and high school with Kerry Von Erich . . . Teamed with Iceman Parsons late in 1983 . . . Adidas and Parsons defeated the Super Destroyers for the World Class tag team title, but only wore the belts for about a month.

OUTLOOK FOR '85: With the top-flight singles talent in the World Class area, Adidas will likely remain mired in the ratings. His best chance for success is to shift into tag team competition and mount a challenge against current World Class tag champs Gino Hernandez and Chris Adams.

VOLUME VI, No. 8 August 1985

★★★★★★★ WRESTLING ★★★★★★★

ENQUIRER

CHAMPS AGAIN!

Windham & Rotundo Regain WWF Tag Belts

Iron Sheik is up in the air, but he'll soon come crashing down on Barry Windham's knee in a very painful spinebreaker.

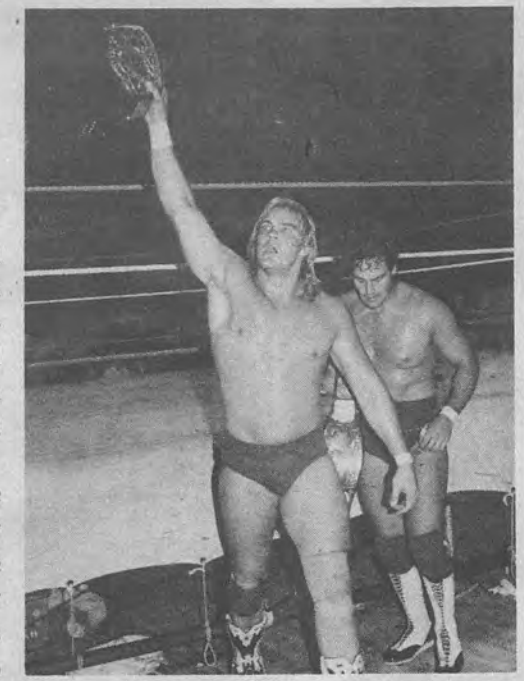
By Craig Peters

POUGHKEEPSIE—Barry Windham and Mike Rotundo happily surprised the crowd in upstate New York when they defeated WWF champions Nikolai Volkoff and The Iron Sheik to recapture the title they had lost almost four months ago.

Rotundo had The Sheik pinned when Nikolai Volkoff ran into the ring and knocked him away. As the referee returned Volkoff to his corner, Rotundo tagged off to Windham, who stormed into the ring and pinned the Sheik, this time for the victory.

For "The Young Lions," the victory was sweet vindication. They had hounded Volkoff and the Sheik around the country since the WrestleMania card, during which Sheik had smashed Windham over the head with manager Freddie Blassie's cane and Volkoff had pinned him for the title.

"This is better than winning it the first time," said Windham. "It's very satisfying to beat Volkoff and The Sheik. Mike and I have been trying for a long time, that's for sure, and this is just great. We're gonna try and keep these belts a little longer this time around."



Windham and Rotundo: WWF tag team champions once more after defeating Iron Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff in Poughkeepsie.

Lawler To Battle Referee

By Bill Apter

MEMPHIS—In an unusual turn of events, Jerry Lawler will wrestle Phil Hickerson and referee Tom Branch in a handicap match.

Branch has been accused of interfering in several of the Mid-South matches that he had been hired to objectively referee. While refereeing a Mid-Southern title match between Lawler and Bota, Branch allegedly held down Lawler's arms and counted the pin, awarding the title to Bota.

Lawler demanded a match against Branch who accepted on the grounds that he can wrestle with Hickerson, a preliminary wrestler. Lawler quickly accepted the terms.

"He can name his forum," cried an angry Lawler. "I don't know where they're getting these crooked referees. I'll teach Branch a lesson he'll never forget." As of press time, Branch's referee's license were being looked over very carefully by Mid-Southern officials. No word on when, or if, a decision will be handed down by officials on Branch's competence.

Dick Murdoch Signs With Mid-South

The return of Capt. Redneck: Dick Murdoch hopes the fans will again be on his side when he returns to the Mid-South area.

By Stu Saks

SHREVEPORT—Dick Murdoch, who says his goal is to "restore the fans' faith in me," has signed a contract with his old friend and current Mid-South promoter Bill Watts.

After he and Adrian Adonis lost the WWF tag team title, they went to Japan for several months. Upon his return to the States, Murdoch was contacted by Watts, his friend of 15 years, and the burly promoter lured Murdoch over with a fat contract and the promise of a quick title match with North American heavyweight champion The Nightmare.

"Basically, Bill made me an offer I couldn't refuse. But beyond the money, I'm excited to be back with the fans and very excited to be back with Bill. We go back a long way.

"I'm gunning for The Nightmare and I intend to have that belt around my waist in a very short time."

Murdoch is expected to revive his "Capt. Redneck" persona, which thrilled fans in Georgia a few years ago.

Hercules Hernandez Scores A Magic Double

By Matt Brock

ORLANDO—In this town of wonder and illusion, Hercules Hernandez pulled off a little magic of his own by defeating Hector Guerrero and capturing the Florida championship. Hernandez is now in possession of both major titles in the Florida area, having defeated Brian Blair earlier in the year to grab the Southern championship.

Hernandez credits much of his success to the influence of Percival Pringle and the Pringle Dynasty. "Percival Pringle has given me the direction I need to utilize my vast potential," boasted Hernandez. "I now intend to move on to the NWA championship."

Observers in the Florida area agree unanimously that Hernandez is wrestling better than he ever has. Veteran announcer Gordon Solie commented that "Hernandez and Pringle have become greater than the sum of their parts. No one down here has been able to stop Hercules."

AROUND THE GLOBE

WAUKESHA, WI

Ken Patera and Mr. Saito, recently convicted of several assault charges stemming from a fight with police officers here on April 6, 1984, were sentenced to two years in prison. According to circuit judge Roger P. Murphy, the two wrestlers will also be placed on probation for six years. Patera and Saito will be eligible for parole in six months.

ATLANTIC CITY, NJ

A recent "Day of Champions" at the Sands Hotel brought together stars from the world of wrestling, kickboxing, and pro boxing. In the wrestling match, WWF champion Hulk Hogan polished off Mr. Fuji in less than eight minutes. "I think Fuji wanted to show his man Muraco how easy it is to beat me," Hogan said. "Instead, he showed him how easy it is to lose."

ST. PAUL, MN

Rick Martel, stung by recent criticism that he is being protected by the AWA, has asked officials to mandate that all of his matches be wrestled to a definite finish. "If I lose—even on a disqualification—I'll lose the belt," Martel said. "I'm not afraid." The AWA Board of Directors is expected to meet on Martel's request sometime in August.

LOOKING AT...

Matt Brock:

EVERY THREE OR four years, someone comes along and the entire wrestling world falls all over itself trying to explain how great a wrestler he is, how he's probably the greatest rookie the sport's ever seen, and how he's going to rule professional wrestling in five years.

1981 was a good example. Take the son of the Living Legend himself, Bruno Sammartino: David Sammartino was voted 1981 Rookie of the Year, and he was the odds-on favorite to capture a major title before the 1984 presidential elections were held.

And what happened? Sammartino floundered in the Georgia area and he is floundering in the WWF. His biggest accolade to date is tag teaming with his father, and there's no sign of a title ahead for this young man.

Now it's 1985, and everyone is paying very close attention to a fellow in his sophomore year as a pro, Nikita Koloff.

Nikita wasn't voted Rookie of the Year in 1984—he was first runner-up, though, by about 500 votes right behind Mike Von Erich. And I haven't heard so much said about a rookie since

Nikita Koloff listens intently to the instructions of his uncle, Ivan Koloff. Nikita hopes to become the first Soviet NWA champion.

. . . hell, I guess the last time was when a couple of green kids by the names of Hawk and Animal decided to take a stab at tag team wrestling.

Look, my first reaction when I hear so much hyperbole about a new kid on the block is to immediately declare 99 percent of everything anyone says about him as being pure bull. As far as the remaining 1 percent goes, I take half of *that* with a couple of dozen grains of salt. And then I go take a look for myself.

Well, I've looked at Nikita, and I can safely say that he *is* going to be awesome in a couple of years. That is, if he remains on the same track that he's on right now. And sometimes that's not so easy in wrestling.

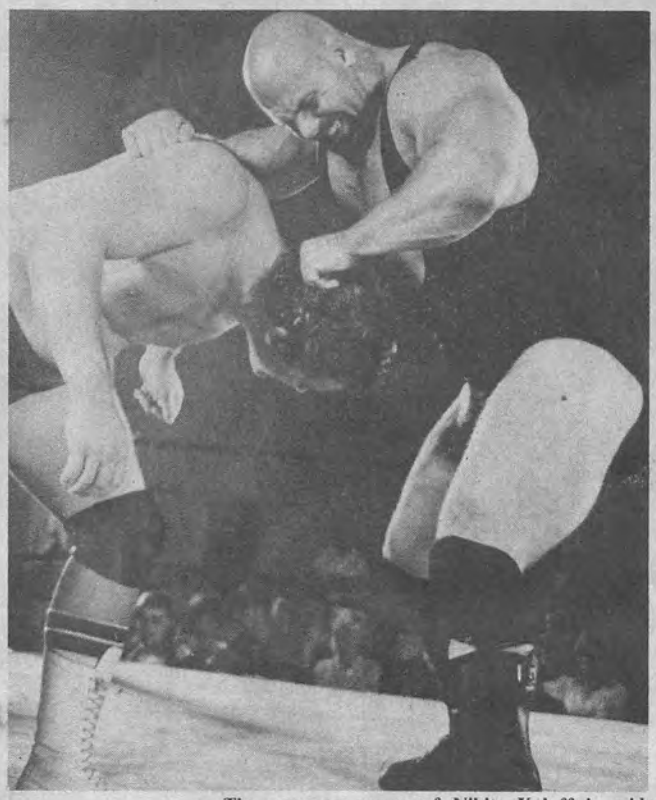
Look at the tag team matches with Nikita and his uncle, Ivan Koloff. You'll notice that Ivan spends most of the time in the ring, wearing down the opponent, and creating an opening through which he can tag off and allow Nikita to cut loose with the Russian sickle, a clothesline about as effective as the ones used by The Road Warriors.

But that's the big problem with Nikita; he's lacking so greatly in pure scientific skills. And believe me, scientific skills melded onto that incredible physique and added to the raw strength that Nikita possesses—that would be quite a wrestling machine indeed.

Fortunately—for Nikita—he has got one of the tactical masters of the mat sport guiding his way: his uncle. Ivan Koloff is, in my opinion, the most knowledgeable Russian athlete on the wrestling scene today. And he's more than willing to pass down his knowledge to his nephew.

But for Nikita to benefit totally

NIKITA KOLOFF



The awesome power of Nikita Koloff is evident every time he wrestles. Even veterans like Ole Anderson have not been able to stop "The Russian Road Warrior's" charge to the top (above right). Youngsters like Mark Fleming (above left) have almost been battered out of the sport by Koloff.

from his uncle's training, he's got to follow his uncle's instructions almost blindly.

Once Nikita starts to pick up some real scientific skills, will he become a little too cocksure and decide he wants to go it on his own, *without* the aid of his uncle? Will Nikita become involved in a feud with the third member of the Russian team, Krusher Khrushchev, because Khrushchev is jealous that Ivan is spending too much time with Nikita? Will Nikita simply prove to be a rookie phenom who burns out as a result of having achieved too much too fast?

The answer to all of these questions is a "definite maybe." But if the answer to any of them turns out to be "yes," then Nikita Koloff's wrestling career will be in a lot of trouble. □

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BETWEEN FALLS

(Continued from page 6)

do deserve the beatings that you will get from them and Gary Hart. I used to feel sorry for you, but not anymore.

IGOR ZASLAVSKY
Brooklyn, NY

AWESOME WARRIORS

I would like to comment on the awesome Road Warriors. I am already making bets on how many broken bones the Russians will have after the Warriors get through with them.

I read a letter once that contended that The Freebirds could defeat the Warriors. Someone tell that fan to go back to the asylum. The Freebirds can't even beat Jim Brunzell and Greg Gagne, let alone the awesome destruction machine that is The Road Warriors. After they capture the NWA belts from the Koloffs, then maybe they'll travel to the WWF and take that championship, too.

Hawk said it best when he said that the Warriors have muscles down their backs while everyone

Reader John Saccenti feels Paul Ellering's Road Warriors are the most fearsome force in wrestling today.

else has yellow streaks.

JOHN SACCENTI
Kendall Park, NJ

WHERE'S RIC'S PIC?

I cannot believe that *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, the world's largest-selling wrestling magazine, has not

Reader Franny Burns will be happy with this month's cover: Her favorite wrestler is NWA World champion Ric Flair.

had a full-color centerfold of the greatest wrestler in the world, Ric Flair. You've stuck the Junkyard Dog in the cover, for God's sake, and he doesn't even own a title. The World champion deserves an entire magazine devoted to him, not to mention a color centerfold. But a centerfold would be a good start. Otherwise your magazine is the best.

FRANNY BURNS
Sarasota, FL

[Editor's note: Ric Flair was featured in the centerfold of our October 1982 issue.]

(Continued on page 50)

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The Wrestler

RIC FLAIR takes on **"DR. D" DAVID SHULTZ** and says: "I wrestle the men **HULK HOGAN** is afraid of!"

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BETWEEN FALLS

(Continued from page 47)

IN DEFENSE OF HOGAN

In the September 1985 issue the story on Hulk Hogan is just too much.

The night Hogan was counted out against Magnificent Muraco, I was there as usual. My son and I were to present an engraved plaque to the Hulkster.

When Hogan entered the ring, I knew immediately by just looking at him that there was something wrong. Then when the match was over my son was taken down near ringside to give him the plaque. By the time he returned, the match was over and I then learned that the Hulkster was very sick with food poisoning. No wonder he was counted out.

Your story makes it appear as if Hogan didn't win the match because he was tired. He was tired not because his schedule had him tired, but because he was sick. Personally, I don't think he should have wrestled that night at all feeling the way he did, but he's a true champion and gives his very best for his Hulkamaniacs.

It seems lately that your series of magazines are downing Hogan. Why? Can't you find anyone else to pick on? First, people write that he is burned out, and then they claim that he couldn't beat Martel or Flair. The heck he couldn't. He could beat them any day. There's *no one,* not Studd, not Piper, not Muraco, not Beefcake who can compare with Hogan. He's held the belt firmly since January 1984 and it will be a long time before he gives it up. He is absolutely the best.

As our engraved plaque read: "Hulk Hogan—A Credit To Professional Wrestling And A True Champion." That's just what he is—the greatest, and we love him.

VERONICA SCHNICKEL
ROBERT SCHNICKEL
Elmhurst, NY □

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DRESSING ROOM CONFIDENTIAL

(Continued from page 12)

While in the World Class area, Billy came to the aid of Sunshine in her battle against Texas rulebreakers.

while the move might have brought him and his father satisfaction, it did not help his career any. Fans had grown to love Billy Jack and had a difficult time adjusting to his new identity.

There was nothing Haynes could do about that but keep wrestling and hope that the problem would work itself out as time passed. There was talk about Billy forming a tag team with Kerry Von Erich, whom he had met while Kerry was touring Florida last May with his NWA belt, but those plans fell apart when Haynes decided to help Sunshine in her campaign to rid Texas of its rulebreakers. Before he could even formulate a battle plan, however, he was ambushed in the ring by Rip Oliver and put out of wrestling with severe lacerations to the head.

Billy went back to his home town of Portland, Oregon, to recuperate. When he finally was able to wrestle again, he didn't want to leave Portland and his father. So there he was, already popular in the lucrative Florida, WWF, and World Class areas and wrestling in the Pacific Northwest. I do not mean to degrade that area in any way. The competition there is good, but being so far away from the nation's wrestling capitals meant that he would very rarely get to wrestle anyone that would help him get back in the national spotlight. "For me to realize my potential," Billy said, "I pretty much knew I had to get myself back into circulation again."

With Mid-Atlantic wrestling now being seen nationally on Super-Station WTBS, Haynes seemed to have made the wisest decision possible when he announced that he would be wrestling in that area. "It's time to settle down," he said just a few months ago. "No more jumping from area to area. I've got to establish myself. I'm going to establish some roots in the World Championship area."

But even before the magazines could reach the stands with the announcement that Haynes would be wrestling in the Mid-Atlantic, Billy had already changed his mind and decided to go back to Florida.

His official explanation is that he wanted to avenge the embarrassment his friend Sunshine had suffered when Hercules Hernandez ditched her before the "Parade of Champions" card at Texas Stadium in May. He says publicly that he wants to take Hernandez's Southern title and force him to apologize to Sunshine. But I think he went back to Florida because that's where he had reached the height of his career. He wants to turn the clock back to that point and take another stab at becoming the superstar everybody feels he can be. (He has even sandwiched the name "Jack" between "Billy" and "Haynes" to see if that might help.)

The harshest of wrestling critics have placed Billy Jack Haynes in the same class as boxing's Gerry Cooney, a man whose potential was wasted for so long that people began to say that that potential never existed. The fairest of wrestling critics are willing to see how long Billy stays in Florida and just what he can accomplish before making any final decision on the man. □

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August 1980/COLOR STARSHOT: Koloff and Smirnoff. Cover story: Bruno vs. Zbyszko. PLUS: Idol, Von Erichs, Rhodes, Hogan.

May 1982/COLOR POSTER: Ric Flair. Cover story: Wrestling II vs. Spoiler. PLUS: Backlund, McDaniel, Piper.

June 1982/COLOR POSTER: Nick Bockwinkel. Cover story: Adonis & Ventura. PLUS: Snuka, Patera, Flair.

August 1982/COLOR POSTER: Dino Bravo. Cover story: Steamboat & Rich. PLUS: Andre, Martel, Piper, Blassie.

September 1982/COLOR POSTER: Blackjack Mulligan Jr. Cover story: Tommy Rich. PLUS: Piper, Snuka, Von Erich, Martel, AWA Sheiks.

October 1982/COLOR POSTER: Jerry Lawler. Cover story: Ric Flair. PLUS: Rhodes, Graham, Race, Funk Jr.

December 1982/COLOR POSTER: Rick Martel. Cover story: Hulk Hogan. PLUS: Von Erich, Orndorff, Albano.

January 1983/COLOR POSTER: Ken Patera. Cover story: Rick Steamboat. PLUS: Rich, Brody, Sullivan, Backlund.

February 1983/COLOR POSTER: Ivan Putski. Cover story: Rhodes vs. Garvin. PLUS: Snuka, Super Destroyer, Bockwinkel, Funk.

April 1983/COLOR POSTER: Superstar Graham. Cover story: Mil Mascaras. PLUS: Valentine, Orndorff, Hart.

June 1983/COLOR POSTER: Cowboy Bob Orton. Cover story: Rick Martel. PLUS: Von Erich, Slaughter, Muraco.

July 1983/COLOR POSTER: Ivan Koloff. Cover story: Tommy Rich. PLUS: Patera, Von Erich, Snuka, Geigel.

August 1983/COLOR POSTER: Larry Zbyszko. Cover story: Roddy Piper. PLUS: Sullivan, Zbyszko, Von Erich, Wrestling II.

October 1983/COLOR POSTER: Junkyard Dog. Cover story: Tommy Rich. PLUS: Johnson, Adonis, Rhodes, Piper.

November 1983/COLOR POSTER: Roddy Piper. Cover story: Harley Race. PLUS: Santana, Mascaras, Ellering, Valiant, Race.

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October 1984/COLOR POSTER: Billy Jack. Cover story: Kerry Von Erich. PLUS: Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

November 1984/COLOR POSTER: Rick Martel. Cover story: Sgt. Slaughter. PLUS: Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

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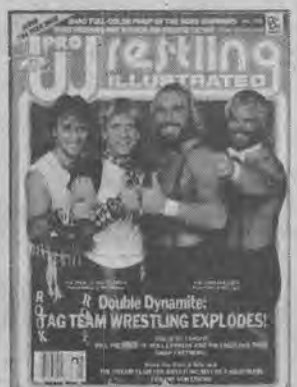

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January 1985/COLOR POSTER: Tito Santana. Cover story: Road Warriors. PLUS: Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

February 1985/COLOR POSTER: Magnum T.A. Cover story: Rick Martel. PLUS: Hogan, Backlund, Ellering.

March 1985/SPECIAL YEAR-END AWARDS ISSUE! FOUR PAGE COLOR SECTION: Billy Jack, Roddy Piper, Ric Flair vs. Kerry Von Erich; PLUS: 1984—The Year In Review.

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RINGSIDE

(Continued from page 8)

still growin'. When I get a little more experience, I want to do something no man has ever done. I want to rassle AWA champion **Rick Martel**, NWA champion **Ric Flair**, and WWF champion **Hulk Hogan** all at once. That way I can unite the three titles by winning them all at the same time!" Little John's got some big ideas, but I have a hunch that those ideas will change as he gains more experience in the pro ranks.

Bill Dundee has returned to Tennessee, and he's after the Mid-Southern belt currently held by **Bota**. "**Jerry Lawler** tells me that this guy is one of the most powerful men he's ever faced. Well, that's a big challenge for a small guy like me. It would be great to win the title from him, because I haven't been back to the Mid-Southern area in years. I'm sure that winning the title would make all my fans very happy!" . . . **J.J. Dillon** was the manager of the team of **Buddy Landell** and **Ron Bass** before the two had a violent split, leaving Dillon to side with Landell. Dillon, who has managed Bass for years, says he's shocked at Ron's bad-mouthing of him. "Bass says I interfere in matches and I cheat. He's painting a rather uncharacteristic picture of myself. Perhaps Ron has taken too many severe beatings and his head has become a bit light."

Buddy Landell and J.J. Dillon are still a team, and their former friend, Ron Bass, has become their enemy.

Tommy Rich has gone to the Southeast to gain revenge from The Nightmares, who are the current Southeastern tag team champions. Tommy's cousin, **Johnny Rich**, teamed with **Steve Armstrong** in a non-title cage match against The Nightmares. After suffering a humiliating defeat, the Nightmares grabbed Johnny as he was leaving the cage, dragged him back into the cage, and beat him until he was a bloody and unconscious mess. Johnny sustained a concussion and had to be hospitalized, and now "Wildfire" is looking to get even.

After facing a horde of bounty hunters, Wahoo McDaniel was glad to get into the ring with the man who signed their checks: Ric Flair.

The war between **Ric Flair** and **Wahoo McDaniel** is getting hotter. As you know, Flair has a bounty on Wahoo's scalp in Florida, and McDaniel has been facing a virtual parade of bounty hunters including **Hercules Hernandez**, **Kevin Sullivan**, **Abdullah the Butcher**, and **Dory Funk Jr**. (The current bounty on Wahoo in Florida now is $20,000.) Now, finding that Flair had an open contract recently in Texas, Wahoo phoned promoter **Paul Boesch** and asked for a match against Flair. "Wahoo was always a great draw here," Boesch said. "He's had trouble securing a match against Flair in Flor-

ida, so I signed the match, realizing how heated their war is. I knew it would be a great match for my Houston fans." The match disappointed no one. Wahoo didn't win the belt, but he did come close.

Rick Steamboat admits that WWF Intercontinental champion **Greg Valentine** is not the same man he feuded with several years ago in the Mid-Atlantic area. "I thought for sure I had Valentine's number," Steamboat said after a recent match with "The Hammer." "I had beaten him many times years back, but now he seems to be more ferocious. It's gonna take a lot to beat Valentine this time around." Many experts feel that it's not Valentine who's, but Steamboat. "He's concentrating too much on martial arts," said Eddie Cheslock, **PWI**'s Mid-Atlantic photographer, who has followed Steamboat's career for many years. "I've been watching Ricky since he started wrestled, and his style is not the same as it was years ago, when he beat Valentine. He's got to drop that martial arts stuff and go back to pure wrestling again."

Bill Watts, happy with his recent comeback, is negotiating with Florida promoters for guest wrestling appearances there ... Veteran star **Cowboy Frankie Laine** is grappling in Houston ... He's had three rematches, but **Dory Funk Jr.** still has not regained the World Wrestling Council heavyweight title from **Carlos Colon**.

Veteran stars **Ray Stevens** and **Bobby Duncum**, two of wrestling's wildest brawlers, recently had an opportunity to wrestle AWA World tag team champions **The Road Warriors**. "They were the toughest men I have ever, ever faced," Stevens admitted. "No team has ever been as brutal as these guys. We had the battle of our lives!" By the way, the fans at the arena in Rhode Island, where the match took place, cheered for the Warriors throughout the bout!

That's all for now. See you at the matches! □

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KING'S COURT

(Continued from page 10)

Mid-South wrestling was ultimately replaced on WTBS by *World Championship Wrestling* after promoter Jim Crockett paid a reported $1 million for the rights to televise wrestling exclusively on the SuperStation. Not unexpectedly, Watts' departure from WTBS caused a lot of fans to become angry. In the few short weeks it was on, Mid-South wrestling excited viewers because of its hectic, nonstop style.

Fortunately, Watts' presence has been maintained by Crockett. Watts wrestled on Crockett's big July 4 Omni card (another example of Watts coming to the rescue—this time at the invitation of Dusty Rhodes), and some Mid-South stalwarts have recently moved north to the World Championship area.

Mid-South born and bred stars The Rock 'n' Roll Express and Magnum T.A. are at the top of the World Championship ratings. Hopefully, Watts and Crockett will continue their lucrative business association.

The amount of current stars who came from Watt's promotion may seem amazing, but the number doesn't surprise Watts. "To make it in the Mid-South," Watts says, "you've gotta work hard. There are no soft opponents or easy matches. Everyone wants to win, and that means that everyone has to be at the top of his form. Every single night."

Watts likens what happens in the Mid-South to a professional football game. "Sometimes, you see football games where it looks like the offensive and defensive linemen have a gentlemen's agreement that each guy only gives 75 percent. But if one guy constantly gives 100 percent, then his opponent had better give 100 percent, too, or else he'll be trampled. That's how it is in the Mid-South: Everyone gives 100 percent. And the fans are the winners, because they see exciting wrestling.

A classic photo from 1963 shows the powerful Watts utilizing one of his favorite holds—the backbreaker. Going down to defeat is Tony Borne. Watts has been one of the finest wrestlers in the sport's history.

We don't need rock 'n' roll stars to make our wrestling exciting. And if a rank amateur like Mr. T ever tried to wrestle in the Mid-South, believe me, he wouldn't last one match before he ended up in a hospital."

Mid-South wrestling is alive, well, and growing. Although not on a national cable (at least as of press time), Watts' show is seen on a vast network of local stations around the country. According to Watts, Mid-South wrestling can now be seen in as many cities as the WWF. "We're growing," Watts says. "The fan response to us has been great. Day after day, we're getting stronger.

The Cowboy is still walking tall.□

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VALENTINE VS. STEAMBOAT

(Continued from page 29)

in another brutal feud, this time with his former close buddy Ricky Steamboat. This feud fell short of Piper and Valentine's war in amount of plasma lost, but certainly not in it's intensity. Steamboat and Piper attacked each other with the savage fury that only enemies who have once been friends possess.

Time and prior commitments eventually separated the three combatants as Steamboat left wrestling to work at his gym, Piper traveled the country, ending up in Portland, and Valentine came to the WWF.

Valentine immediately engaged Tito Santana in a series of matches, seeking Santana's Intercontinental belt. With the help of his still bad-as-they-come manager Lou Albano, Valentine crippled Santana, putting him in the hospital with extensive knee damage and took his title.

(Continued on page 60)

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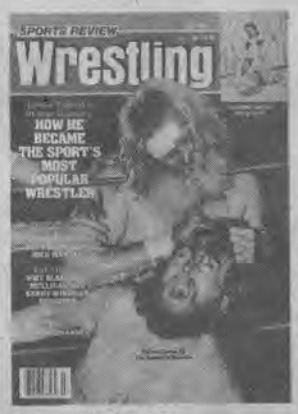

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VALENTINE VS. STEAMBOAT

(Continued from page 58)

In the WWF, Steamboat has surprisingly concentrated more on martial arts tactics than classic scientific wrestling, and many observers feel it has hurt him. Here he misses badly with a kung-fu-type mulekick. Perhaps Steamboat's new style is being perfected for a future match against Piper.

Steamboat, suspended in the limbo of semi-retirement, finally re-committed himself to the ring, and has made his way east to the WWF. Establishing himself quickly as one of the promotion's top grapplers, Steamboat now finds himself emeshed in a feud with, yes, Mr. Greg Valentine for the Intercontinental Belt.

And as the voltage of their feud escalates, Mr. Roddy Piper, himself a card carrying member of the WWF, can be seen humming wistfully under his breath, *"Reunited and it feels so good . . ."*

For Piper, who has carved a career out of instigating and orchestrating dozens of feuds, having two of his biggest enemies banging away at each other *without* the benefit of his involvement is better than winning the lottery. To enjoy this one, all Piper has to do is obtain a ringside seat, and given his relationship with WWF head Vince McMahon, he can probably get one complimentary.

Steamboat is fed up with both Valentine and Piper and shared these thoughts. "Piper is probably taking credit for this whole thing," said the WWF's newest heartthrob. "I remember feeling real sorry for Piper when Valentine almost tore his ear off down in the Carolinas. Now I wish that he'd have tore out his vocal cords. I'm sick of that voice and when I'm through with Valentine you can be sure that Piper is next on my list."

"If Piper is gloating through all of this then let him. It sure doesn't bother me. My concern right now is the Intercontinental belt, which I plan on having around my waist very shortly. Then I'll talk to Roddy Piper."

Piper, for his part, is uncharacteristically silent, electing to enjoy this unexpected pleasure quietly. Except there are reports that during a particularly violent exchange in a recent Steamboat-Valentine match, Piper could be heard distinctively humming, *"Some guys have all the luck . . ."* □

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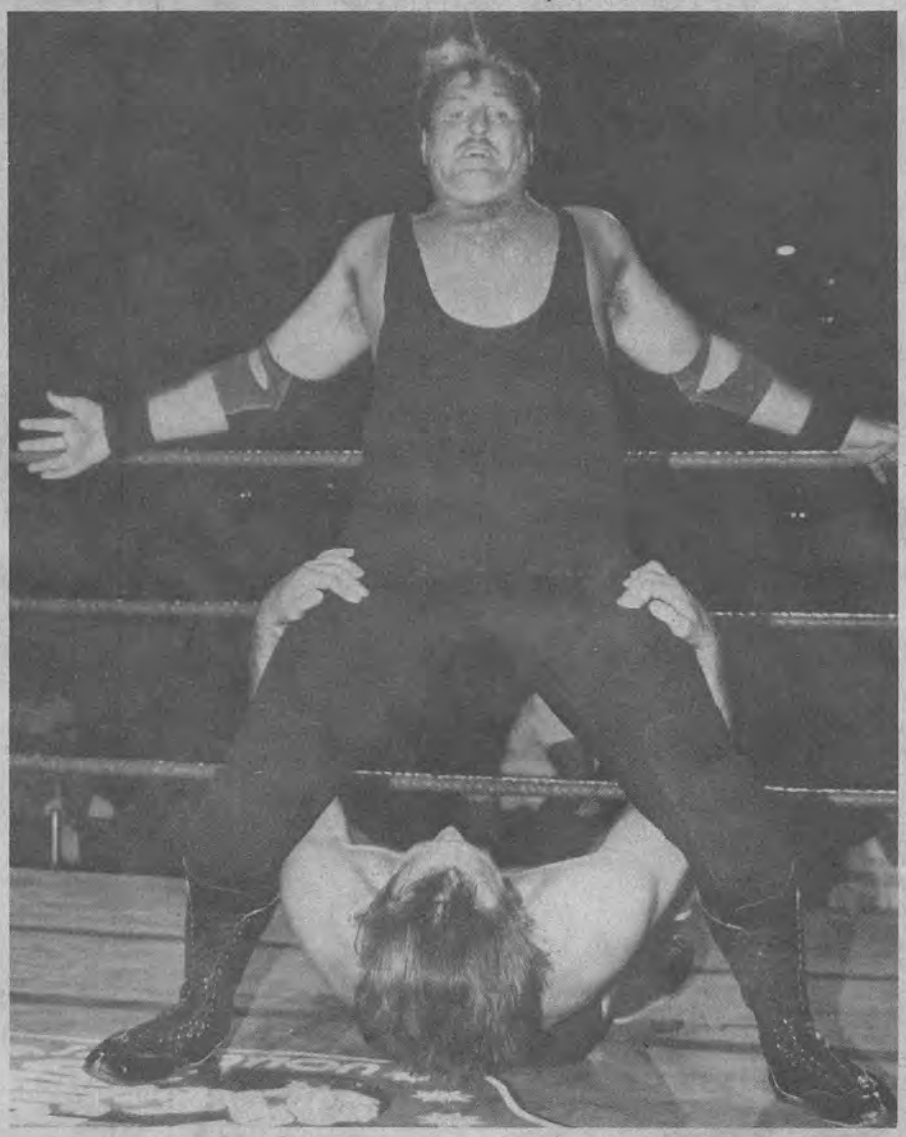
SGT. SLAUGHTER

(Continued from page 31)

title, Slaughter chased after him, caught him, and banged his head against the press table. After slugging him several more times, Slaughter hurled Zbyszko back into the ring, placed him in a fierce neckbreaker, and pinned him.

As the fans screamed their approval, Slaughter held the Americas belt—his first major title—high above his head, flushed with the moment of victory. Afterwards, in the subdued climate of the locker-room, he explained what the title meant to

Slaughter connects with a hard right as Zbyszko is immobilized against the ropes (left). The battle rages outside the ring, and The Sarge is about to introduce Zbyszko's head to a nearby press table (right). Slaughter tries to maintain his balance after Zbyszko came up and over him with a sunset flip (below).



him.

"This is great, it's just wonderful. I hope this proves to everyone that Sgt. Slaughter is not just a one-dimensional wrestler. People were always asking me why I never had a title, why couldn't I ever win a title. I had priorities. I had men like Kamala and Iron Sheik and Al-Kaisse to deal with. It was more important to dispatch them than it was to go after a title.

"Everything falls into place now. I gave Zbyszko what he deserved. I'm defending the Americas championship, which right now I'd rather have than any title in the country.

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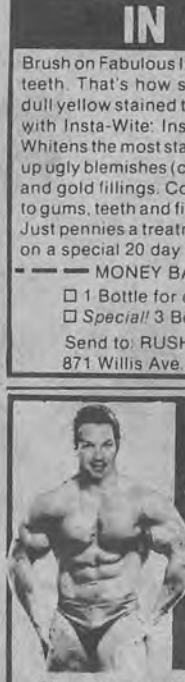

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BRENDAN BYRNE ARENA (East Rutherford, NJ): **Jimmy Snuka, Ricky Steamboat, & Paul Orndorff** defeated **Greg Valentine, Cowboy Bob Orton, & Bobby Heenan** by countout . . . **Junkyard Dog** defeated **Jesse Ventura** . . . **The Missing Link** defeated **George Wells** . . . **Magnificent Muraco** beat **Ivan Putski** . . . **The Spoiler** defeated **Rick McGraw** . . . **Rene Goulet** defeated **Gama Singh** . . . **Tony Garea** defeated **Mr. X** . . . **Salvatore Bellomo** beat **Steve Lombardi.**

—Ken Barbour

McELROY AUDITORIUM (Waterloo, IA): **Junkyard Dog** defeated **Brutus Beefcake** . . . **Ivan Putski & Mad Dog Vachon** beat **John Studd & Jimmy Valiant** . . . **Greg Valentine** defeated **Tito Santana** . . . **Magnificent Muraco** defeated **Tony Garea** . . . **Missing Link** beat **Salvatore Bellomo** . . . **Moondog Spot** and **S.D. Jones** drew.

—Duane Melsh

MONTVALE FIELD HOUSE (Montvale, NJ): **Hulk Hogan & Paul Orndorff** defeated **Roddy Piper & Bob Orton** by disqualification . . . **Black Tiger** beat **The Cobra** by countout . . . **Nikolai Volkoff & The Iron Sheik** defeated **Mike Rotundo & Barry Windham** . . . **Brutus Beefcake** beat **Tito Santana** . . . **King Kong Bundy** defeated **Salvatore Bellomo & S.D. Jones** . . . **Ken Patera** defeated **Paul Kelly** . . . **Brett Hart** defeated **Jose Luis Rivera** . . . **Gama Singh** defeated **Johnny Rodz.**

—David Hacky

PASCACK VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL (Hillsdale, NJ): **Greg Valentine** defeated **Jimmy Snuka** . . . **John Studd** defeated **Tito Santana** . . . **Paul Orndorff** beat **Cowboy Bob Orton** . . . **Dynamite Kid & Davey Boy Smith** drew with **Roddy Piper & The Spoiler** . . . **Junkyard Dog** beat **Terry Gibbs** . . . **Missing Link** defeated **Sal Bellomo** . . . **King Kong Bundy** beat **David Barbie** . . . **Rick Steamboat** defeated **Mr. X.**

—Janet Jibrit

CIVIC AUDITORIUM (Omaha, NE): **Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** vs. **Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo** ended in double-disqualification . . . **Paul Orndorff** defeated **Cowboy Bob Orton** by disqualification . . . **Mad Dog Vachon** defeated **Moondog Spot** . . . **Ivan Putski** beat **Johnny Valiant** . . . **Missing Link** beat **S.D. Jones** . . . **Jim Neidhardt** defeated **Salvatore Bellomo** . . . **Brett Hart** beat **Tony Garea.**

—Andrew Meyer

PITTSBURGH CIVIC ARENA (Pittsburgh): **Bruno & David Sammartino** defeated **Brutus Beefcake & Johnny Valiant** . . . **Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo** beat **The Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** by disqualification . . . **George Steele** beat **Les Thornton** . . . **John Studd** defeated **Swede Hanson** . . . **Tony Atlas** defeated **Matt Borne** . . . **Brian Blair** defeated **Barry O** . . . **S.D. Jones** drew with **Terry Gibbs** . . . **Desiree Peterson** defeated **Judy Martin.**

—Mike Rossi

CANTON CIVIC CENTER (Canton, OH): **Junkyard Dog & Tito Santana** defeated **Brutus Beefcake & Greg Valentine** . . . **Tony Garea** beat **George Wells** . . . **Ivan Putski** defeated **Les Thornton** . . . **Desiree Peterson** defeated **Judy Martin** . . . **The Spoiler** beat **Tony Garea.**

—Brian Dulik

HARTFORD CIVIC CENTER (Hartford, CT): **Tito Santana** defeated **Greg Valentine** on a countout . . . **Junkyard Dog** beat **Brutus Beefcake** . . . **George Steele** defeated **The Iron Sheik** by disqualification . . . **Brett Hart & Jim Neidhardt** defeated **S.D. Jones & George Wells** . . . **Missing Link** beat **Tony Garea** . . . **Rick McGraw** defeated **Mr. X.**

—Jimmy Cipriani

ROCHESTER WAR MEMORIAL ARENA (Rochester, NY): **John Studd** defeated **Tony Atlas** . . . **Brian Blair** beat **Barry O** . . . **Jim Bruznell** defeated **Moondog Spot** . . . **Missing Link** defeated **Tony Garea** . . . **Swede Hanson** beat **Jim Young.**

—Mike Thompson

NEW HAVEN COLISEUM (New Haven, CT): **Paul Orndorff & Cowboy Bob Orton** were both counted out . . . **Tito Santana & Junkyard Dog** defeated **Greg Valentine & Brutus Beefcake** . . . **Magnificent Muraco** beat **Ivan**

Putski . . . **Jimmy Snuka** defeated **Gama Singh** . . . **Missing Link** defeated **George Wells** . . . **Rick McGraw** defeated **Mr. X** . . . **Brian Blair** beat **Les Thornton.**

—Joe Cuff

BEEGLY CENTER (Youngstown, OH): **Barry Windham, Mike Rotundo, & George Steele** defeated **The Iron Sheik, Nikolai Volkoff, Jesse Ventura** . . . **John Studd** beat **Tony Atlas** by countout . . . **Desiree Peterson** defeated **Judy Martin** . . . **Matt Borne** beat **Jimmy Jackson** . . . **Swede Hanson** defeated **Barry O** . . . **S.D. Jones & Terry Gibbs** drew.

—Bob Pannutti

VETERAN'S MEMORIAL COLISEUM (Phoenix, AZ): **Nikolai Volkoff & The Iron Sheik** vs. **Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo** ended in a double-disqualification . . . **Paul Orndorff** defeated **Cowboy Bob Orton** . . . **Jimmy Snuka** beat **Les Thornton** . . . **Brian Blair** defeated **Rene Goulet** . . . **Brett Hart** beat **Gama Singh** . . . **Tony Atlas** beat **Jim Neidhardt.**

—Mike Penner

MAPLE LEAF GARDENS (Toronto): **Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo** defeated **Nikolai Volkoff & The Iron Sheik** by countout . . . **Wendi Richter** beat **The Fabulous Moolah** . . . **Cowboy Bob Orton** defeated **Jimmy Snuka** by countout . . . **Barry O** defeated **John Koloff** . . . **George Steele** beat **Matt Borne** . . . **Joey War Eagle** drew with **Johnny Valiant.**

—Chris Stacy

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN (New York): **Hulk Hogan** defeated **Magnificent Muraco** in a steel cage match . . . **Rick Steamboat** beat **Greg Valentine** by countout . . . **John Studd, Adrian Adonis, & Bobby Heenan** defeated **George Steele, Mike Rotundo, & Barry Windham** by disqualification . . . **King Kong Bundy** defeated **Tony Garea** . . . **Jim Brunzell** beat **Moondog Spot** . . . **Brian Blair** defeated **Barry O** . . . **Desiree Peterson** defeated **Judy Martin** . . . **Missing Link** defeated **Jose Luis Rivera** . . . **Randy Savage** beat **Rick McGraw** . . . **Lanny Poffo** defeated **Terry Gibbs** . . . **Tony Atlas** defeated **Matt Borne.**

—Jeff Velocci

CAPITAL CENTRE (Landover, MD): **Jimmy Snuka, Rick Steamboat, & Paul Orndorff** defeated **John Studd, Bob Orton, & Bobby Heenan** . . . **Tony Atlas** defeated **Magnificent Muraco** by disqualification . . . **Jesse Ventura** beat **Tony Garea** . . . **Gama Singh** defeated **Steve Lombardi** . . . **Junkyard Dog** defeated **Les Thornton** . . . **Brutus Beefcake** defeated **Swede Hanson** . . . **Brian Blair** defeated **Barry O.**

—Tony Olcott

PEORIA CIVIC CENTER (Peoria, IL): **Paul Orndorff** defeated **Roddy Piper** by disqualification . . . **Jim Neidhardt** defeated **S.D. Jones** . . . **Brett Hart** beat **Mr. Wrestling II** . . . **The Dynamite Kid & Davey Boy Smith** defeated **The Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** by disqualification . . . **Cowboy Bob Orton** beat **Junkyard Dog** . . . **David Sammartino** defeated **Rene Goulet** . . . **Mad Dog Vachon** beat **Bobby Clark.**

—Marty Settles

JACKSONVILLE COLISEUM (Jacksonville, FL): **Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo** beat **The Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** by disqualification . . . **Wendi Richter** defeated **The Fabulous Moolah** . . . **Jim Neidhardt** defeated **Rick McGraw** . . . **Brett Hart** beat **S.D. Jones** . . . **Mr. Wrestling II** drew with **George Wells** . . . **R.J. Reynolds** defeated **Aldo Marino.**

—Cynthia Shipp

METROPOLITAN AUDITORIUM (Bloomington, MN): **Hulk Hogan** beat **Magnificent Muraco** by disqualification . . . **Tito Santana** defeated **Greg Valentine** by countout . . . **Cowboy Bob Orton** defeated **Paul Orndorff** by disqualification . . . **The Spoiler** defeated **Tony Garea** . . . **Ken Patera** beat **Swede Hanson** . . . **Jim Neidhardt & Brett Hart** defeated **Salvatore Bellomo & George Wells** . . . **S.D. Jones** drew with **Steve Lombardi.**

—Jason Smoliak

RECAP: It was a tough month for **Tito Santana,** who had a losing record in singles competition, although his tag team combination with **Junkyard Dog** was undefeated . . . **Hulk Hogan** was largely inactive, although he did earn a smashing victory over **Magnificent Muraco** in the Garden . . . **Greg Valentine** turned back the challenges of **Jimmy Snuka** and **Tito Santana,** but his countout loss to **Rick Steamboat** in the Garden may foreshadow rough times ahead for The Hammer . . . **George Wells** had a very poor month, as did **Tony Garea** . . . The once-undefeated **Brutus Beefcake** is starting to lose regularly now that his level of competition has risen. □

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B172IF

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PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

T.V. SPORTS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board.

Chris Adams

TOP 10

1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN

2—**RICK MARTEL**
236, Quebec City, Quebec

3—**HULK HOGAN**
302, Venice Beach, CA

4—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA

5—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX

6—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX

7—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia

8—**CHRIS ADAMS**
230, Stratford, England

9—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI

10—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**
310, Parris Island, SC

TAG TEAMS

1—**THE ROAD WARRIORS**
AWA World tag team champions
Combined weight: 567 pounds

2—**IVAN & NIKITA KOLOFF**
NWA World tag team champions
Combined weight: 524 pounds

3—**BARRY WINDHAM & MIKE ROTUNDO**
WWF World tag team champions
Combined weight: 475 pounds

4—**TED DiBIASE & STEVE WILLIAMS**
Mid-South tag team champions
Combined weight: 535 pounds

5—**CHRIS ADAMS & GINO HERNANDEZ**
World Class tag team champions
Combined weight: 454 pounds

6—**OLE & ARN ANDERSON**
National tag team champions
Combined weight: 525 pounds

7—**RICK RUDE & JESSE BARR**
U.S. tag team champions
Combined weight: 489 pounds

8—**NIKOLAI VOLKOFF & IRON SHEIK**
No. 1 contenders to WWF tag team title
Combined weight: 607 pounds

9—**RICK MORTON & ROBERT GIBSON**
No. 1 contenders to National tag team title
Combined weight: 453 pounds

10—**JONATHAN BOYD & RIP MORGAN**
Mid-Southern tag team champions
Combined weight: 542 pounds

NWA, AWA, and WWF ratings, in addition to the regional ratings from around the country, are based on the official current position of challengers to the top title in each category. (Certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings). Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and mail that comes to our offices.

NWA

World Champion:
RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN

1—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA

2—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX

3—**BLACK BART**
301, Houston, TX

4—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia

5—**CHRIS ADAMS**
230, Stratford, England

6—**HERCULES HERNANDEZ**
252, Tampa, FL

7—**JERRY BLACKWELL**
474, Stone Mountain, GA

8—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX

9—**GINO HERNANDEZ**
224, Houston, TX

10—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX

AWA

World Champion:
RICK MARTEL
236, Quebec City, Quebec

1—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**
310, Parris Island, SC

2—**MICHAEL HAYES**
255, Marietta, GA

3—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA

4—**NICK BOCKWINKEL**
245, Beverly Hills, CA

5—**BUTCH REED**
265, Kansas City, MO

6—**THE TONGA KID**
226, Tonga

7—**JERRY BLACKWELL**
474, Stone Mountain, GA

8—**KAMALA**
360, Uganda

9—**MASKED SUPERSTAR**
282, Atlanta, GA

10—**RAY STEVENS**
243, San Francisco, CA

WWF

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA

1—**GREG VALENTINE**
243, Seattle, WA

2—**MAGNIFICENT MURACO**
274, Sunset Beach, HA

3—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI

4—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL

5—**TITO SANTANA**
245, Mission, TX

6—**JUNKYARD DOG**
260, New Orleans, LA

7—**RODDY PIPER**
231, Scotland

8—**JOHN STUDD**
364, Washington, DC

9—**JIMMY SNUKA**
250, Fiji Islands

10—**KING KONG BUNDY**
446, Atlantic City, NJ

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

1—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA

2—**BLACK BART**
301, Houston, TX

3—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX

4—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX

5—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia

6—**DICK SLATER**
235, Tampa, FL

7—**MANNY FERNANDEZ**
245, El Paso, TX

8—**SUPERSTAR GRAHAM**
260, Paradise Valley, AZ

9—**JIMMY VALIANT**
251, New York, NY

10—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
235, Boston, MA

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

WORLD CLASS

1—CHRIS ADAMS
230, Stratford, England
2—GINO HERNANDEZ
224, Houston, TX
3—KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX
4—KEVIN VON ERICH
239, Denton, TX
5—ONE MAN GANG
468, Chicago, IL
6—KILLER BROOKS
235, Lancaster, TX
7—KABUKI
252, Singapore
8—SCOTT CASEY
242, San Antonio, TX
9—MIKE VON ERICH
220, Denton, TX
10—BRIAN ADIDAS
238, Denton, TX

MID-SOUTH

1—THE NIGHTMARE
285, parts unknown
2—DICK MURDOCH
270, Waxahachie, TX
3—TED DiBIASE
247, Omaha, NB
4—THE SNOWMAN
250, Memphis, TN
5—HACKSAW DUGGAN
280, New York, NY
6—STEVE WILLIAMS
295, Tulsa, OK
7—KAMALA
360, Uganda
8—JAKE ROBERTS
243, Baton Rouge, LA
9—ICEMAN PARSONS
245, St. Louis, MO
10—DUTCH MANTEL
242, Oil Trough, TX

FLORIDA

1—HERCULES HERNANDEZ
252, Tampa, FL
2—HECTOR GUERRERO
243, Mexico
3—JESSE BARR
243, Portland, OR
4—RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN
5—WAHOO McDANIEL
260, Midland, TX
6—BILLY JACK HAYNES
245, Portland, OR
7—BLACKJACK MULLIGAN
310, Sweetwater, TX
8—BUGSY McGRAW
268, New York, NY
9—MIKE GRAHAM
229, Tampa, FL
10—RIP ROGERS
238, Atlanta, GA

MID-SOUTHERN

1—BOTA
270, Maori Islands
2—TERRY TAYLOR
225, Vero Beach, FL
3—JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
4—BRUISER BRODY
300, Albuquerque, NM
5—JERRY OSKE
243, Hartford, CT
6—JAY YOUNGBLOOD
234, Amarillo, TX
7—LORD JONATHAN BOYD
255, Aucklund, New Zealand
8—TOJO YAMAMOTO
230, Tokyo, Japan
9—RIP MORGAN
250, Auklund, New Zealand
10—BILLY TRAVIS
218, Houston; TX

MISSOURI

1—JERRY BLACKWELL
474, Stone Mountain, GA
2—HARLEY RACE
253, Kansas City, MO
3—KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX
4—BOB BACKLUND
242, Princeton, MN
5—WAHOO McDANIEL
260, Midland, TX
6—MR. POGO
255, Tokyo, Japan
7—BUTCH REED
265, Kansas City, MO
8—ICEMAN PARSONS
232, St. Louis, MO
9—TED DiBIASE
247, Omaha, NB
10—BULLDOG BOB BROWN
258, Winnipeg, Manitoba

NORTHWEST

1—MIKE MILLER
260, Memphis, TN
2—BOBBY JAGGERS
265, Dunlap, KS
3—KENDO NAGASAKI
248, Singapore
4—KARL STEINER
250, East Germany
5—CURT HENNIG
235, Minneapolis, MN
6—PLAYBOY BUDDY ROSE
245, Hollywood, CA
7—RICKY VAUGHAN
245, Tampa, FL
8—MEGA MAHARISHI
260, Portland, OR
9—RIP OLIVER
245, Tampa, FL
10—MR. EBONY
242, parts unknown

MOST POPULAR

1—HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA
2—KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX
3—MAGNUM T.A.
245, Chesapeake, VA
4—DUSTY RHODES
302, Austin, TX
5—RICK MARTEL
236, Quebec City, Quebec
6—SGT. SLAUGHTER
310, Parris Island, SC
7—JUNKYARD DOG
260, New Orleans, LA
8—KEVIN VON ERICH
239, Denton, TX
9—WAHOO McDANIEL
260, Midland, TX
10—TERRY TAYLOR
225, Vero Beach, FL

MOST HATED

1—RODDY PIPER
231, Glasgow, Scotland
2—CHRIS ADAMS
230, Stratford, England
3—TULLY BLANCHARD
235, San Antonio, TX
4—NIKITA KOLOFF
276, Moscow, Russia
5—GINO HERNANDEZ
224, Houston, TX
6—GREG VALENTINE
243, Seattle, WA
7—TED DiBIASE
247, Omaha, NB
8—RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN
9—KEVIN SULLIVAN
235, Boston, MA
10—JOHN STUDD
364, Washington, DC

For period ended July 2, 1985

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 150 wrestlers in 14 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

The world title controversy—settled. In the August 1985 edition of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* "Ratings Analysis" solicited reader mail regarding the question: "Should the WWF title be regarded as a world championship?" That "Ratings Analysis" examined arguments for and against recognizing Hulk Hogan as a world champion, in the same way that Ric Flair and Rick Martel are world champions.

Hulk Hogan

Mail flooded our office. Last month's "Ratings Analysis" presented excerpts from some of your letters regarding this championship controversy.

As this issue goes to press, a decision has been made: The WWF title will now be regarded as a world championship, equal in significance to the NWA and AWA World championships.

We anticipate a lot of reader reaction to come from this decision. Indeed, the editorial staff of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* continues to be split about whether this move should have been made, but we all agree on one thing: This was a democratic decision. Majority rules. And the majority of your mail (about 60 percent) came out in favor of recognizing Hogan as a world champion.

So, in the ratings, in "Ratings Analysis," and in the stories that you will read in *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* and its sister publications, the WWF heavyweight title and the WWF tag team title will be recognized as world championships.

We are as interested in your reactions to this decision now as we were interested in your answers to the question made months ago. If you would like to voice your opinion on the WWF world championship controversy, we would like to hear from you. If reaction warrants, a future "Ratings Analysis" will be devoted entirely to your letters on the matter.

Send your comments to: "WWF Ratings Analysis" c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated;* Box 48; Rockville Centre; New York 11571.

Stop me if you've heard this one before: The following letter came from Rich Wilson of Philadelphia:

"I love your ratings system and 'Ratings Analysis,' but how come the 'Ratings Analysis' is the same in *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* as it is in *The Wrestler* as it is in *Sports Review Wrestling*? Why don't you do a different analysis for each magazine?"

Actually, Rich, we try to make each "Ratings Analysis" as different as possible, though you're right: There *are* similarities within each month's series of magazines. This is mainly due to the fact that some issues are very important and bear repeating from magazine to magazine, such as the WWF World title controversy. And since many fans may only read one of the above-mentioned magazines, we want to make sure that everyone is filled in on the important developments. You'll also note that when we feature an extra category in our ratings, such as Polynesian Pacific ratings, the rankings change from issue to issue, depending on the deadline of when that issue went to press.

Regarding the Russians: Time to clear up what has become a slight bit of confusion regarding our tag team ratings.

"Ratings Analysis" has received a few letters regarding the fact that the NWA World tag team belts are being defended by not only Ivan and Nikita Koloff, but Krusher Khrushchev as well. Any two of the above three wrestlers have been allowed by the NWA to defend the NWA world tag belts. So why are Ivan and Nikita the only ones listed in the ratings?

Ivan Koloff

"In this case," explained Senior Editor Bill Apter, "it was Ivan and Nikita who actually won the belts from Dusty Rhodes and Manny Fernandez. Furthermore, the majority of title defenses are made by Ivan and Nikita as opposed to either Ivan and Khrushchev or Nikita and Khrushchev.

Nikita Koloff

"Also," Apter continued, "our policy has been to rate two-man teams in the tag team category, which is why the Von Erichs, for example, aren't included in the tag team category each month—as they well might be if we considered three-member teams for inclusion in the ratings. It's tough to compare two-man and three-member teams with each other, in terms of something as complex as ability and skill levels, or as simple as combined weights."

Look for a future installment of "Ratings Analysis" to provide a top 10 listing of the best three-member tag team in the sport.

The address for mail: We always like to read your comments and questions about our ratings system. Send them to: "Ratings Analysis" c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated;* Box 48; Rockville Centre; New York 11571. □

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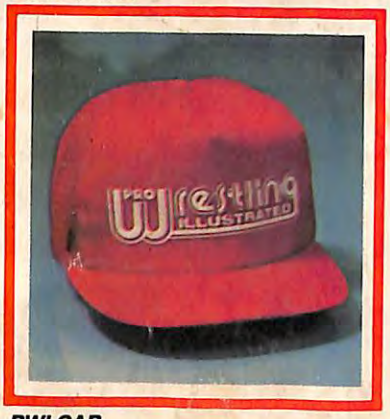

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